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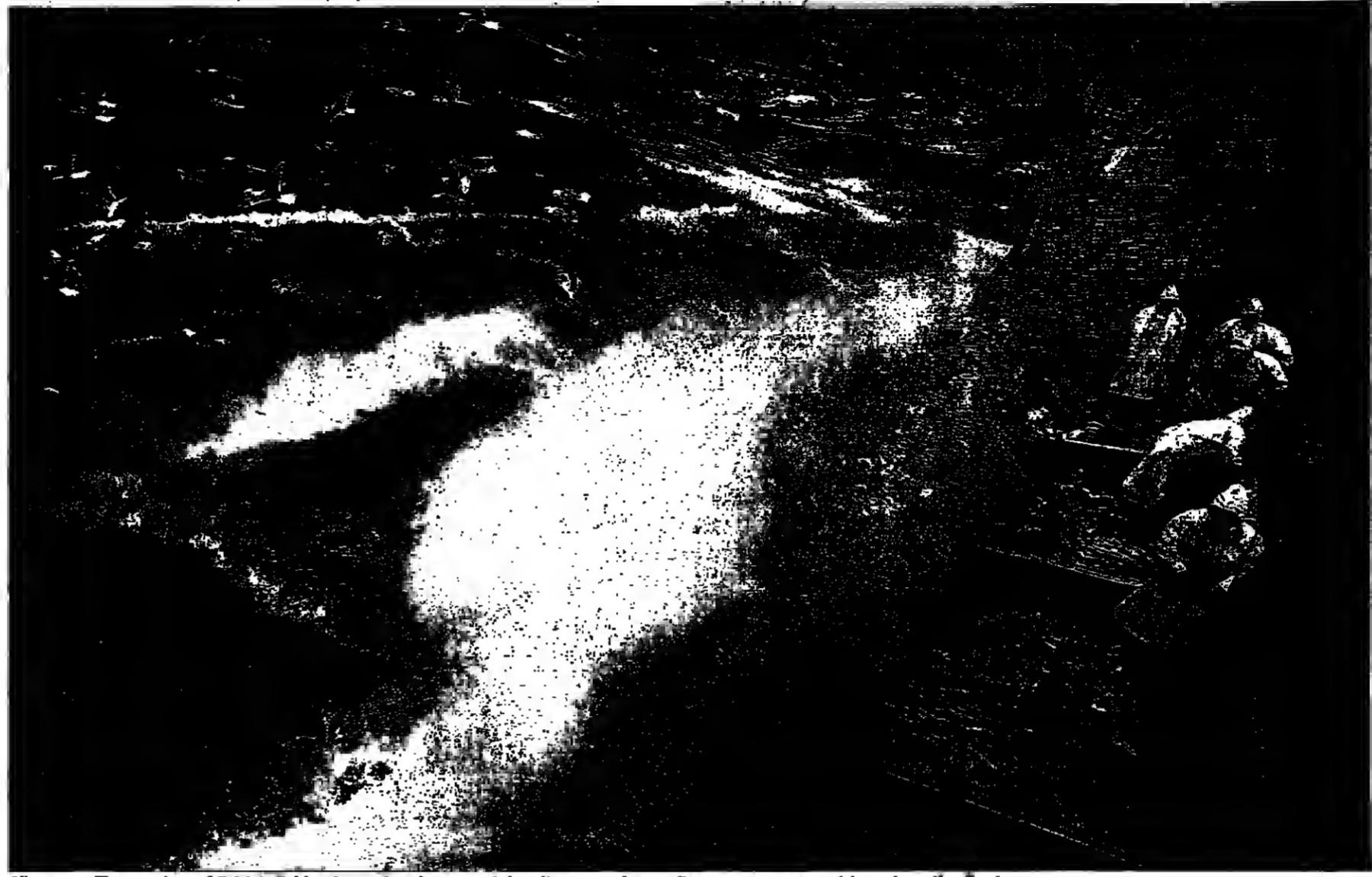
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FRIDAY 31 MAY 1996

WEATHER Sunny spells and showers 40p (IR 45p)

Too many fishers on the sea

By John Lichfield and Donald Macintyre



All at sea: The number of British fishing boats has increased despite a unanimous European agreement to reduce the fleets

Sharp cuts in the British fishing fleet proposed by Brussels are the product of 13 years of double-talk by British ministers, promising cuts in capacity which never materialised.

Despite the bluster of the Government yesterday, the fact is the UK fishing fleet has steadily grown for most of the 13 years of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) – despite pledges of cuts and conservation made by British ministers.

The growth has little to do with foreign fishing vessels sailing under British flags – the so-called "quanta

"hoppers" – most of which have existed for many years. It has much to do with Government policy, which has restricted British fishermen from claiming generous subsidies from Brussels for paying off old vessels.

The impression in this country is that our fishing fleet has been decimated by unfair competition from foreign vessels and by the collapse of fishing stocks. In reality, despite a decline in fish stocks, the number of British boats, and the catching power of the active British fleet, has increased since the CFP was agreed in

1983. Judged on boat numbers alone, the fleet of larger, sea-going British boats (more than 10 metres) has increased by a third. Smaller, inshore boats has increased by two thirds.

Over the last nine years, Britain has done less than any other country, except the Netherlands, to meet unanimously agreed European targets for reducing boat numbers. In the period 1987-91, the Government agreed to an EU-wide programme of cuts which would have reduced the capacity of the UK fleet by nearly 7 per cent. In fact, according to EU figures,

its tonnage and horsepower grew by three per cent.

The Government yesterday roundly dismissed the European Commission's call for cuts of up to 40 per cent in the UK fleet over the next seven years. Tony Baldry, the fisheries minister, secured all-party support when he issued a blunt counter-demand for the outlawing of "quota hoppers" – foreign-owned British boats taking part of the UK catch. But Brussels officials said their proposal – which would reduce all EU fleets – was in line with long-agreed policy to reduce

catching capacity and preserve what remains of hard-pressed fish stocks.

The Commission accepts "quotahopping" is a serious problem for the Government. Brussels also acknowledges that it makes a nonsense of the principle of national fishing quotas. Foreign-owned boats, mostly Spanish and Dutch, take over 40 per cent of British quota for hake and plaice. Brussels sources say fisheries Commissioner Emma Bonino encouraged the Government last year to suggest a way of protecting British quotas which would not infringe European law. The Government has failed to respond formally so far.

One reason for the failure to pay off older British boats was the reluctance of the Government to participate in an EU de-commissioning scheme. Seventy per cent of the cash would have come from Brussels. The Treasury opposed full-scale participation on the grounds that payments to UK fishermen would have reduced Britain's annual "cash rebate" from the EU and upset public spending calculations. At the same time, some UK fishermen have been taking advantage of loose British licensing regulations to "trade up" to larger boats.

In the last five years, a limited use of the EU cash has been allowed and some net reductions have been made in the British fleet but nowhere near the targets agreed. The Netherlands is an even bigger offender. By contrast, Spain, the usual fish whipping boy, has cut its fleet by five per cent more than the EU required. Hence the need – according to Brussels – for the British and the Dutch fleets to be reduced more sharply than others over the next six years.

Industrial trawling empties the oceans

JOJO MOYES

The big truth behind this week's war of words over European fisheries policy is that the oceans are being emptied of life by industrial fishing. Over the past few decades, a revolution in fishing techniques and the growth of the world population have caused a dramatic slump in fish stocks. It is a story which starts with Britain and the North Sea.

From Roman times until the early years of this century, the seas around Britain were famous for their rich abundance of sea life. But even when the industrial revolution began to create a mass market for fish,

stocks remained relatively stable. This was not because of conservation or incompetence; fishing methods stayed remarkably similar from medieval times until well into this century. And on land, transport difficulties meant that for centuries fish only tended to reach much of the population after it was dried or salted.

The precursor to the modern chippy – Simpson's Fish Ordinary, a "fish and chip shop" – existed as early as 1723. But it was the arrival in Britain of commercial refrigeration in 1861, together with rapid urbanisation, that both created an appetite for cheap protein and provided the means to satisfy it.

"We like to think fish was the first protein-based fast food," said Arthur Parrington, general secretary of the National Federation of Fish Friers. "Sellers would fry it and peddle it on the streets. Dickens even made references to fried fish warehouses in Oliver Twist."

Fish was nutritious, cheap, and gradually became easily available. In the recession of the 1930s there were 50,000 fish and chip outlets (today there are 8,500). Known as "pin money" shops, they were run by housewives from the front of their homes.

But despite the increasing demand, fish stocks didn't drop dramatically, partly because of

the temporary removal of trawlers from the seas during the First and Second World Wars. There seemed to be no reason to believe that the oceans would be anything but the source of an eternal harvest.

Then in the 1950s, the tide turned, chiefly because it became profitable to catch fish for industrial products – oils, fishmeal, fertiliser and animal feed. Trawlers which could gut and freeze huge quantities of fish on board were introduced. Technology-based industrial fishing was born.

Thirty years on, satellites enable trawlers to predict the weather and sonars pinpoint shoals of fish. Huge nets hoover

them up; in some parts of the world, these are 50 miles long, with openings that could accommodate 16 jumbo jets.

The results have been dramatic. From the turn of the century the world's fish catch grew nearly 20 times over. But it fell sharply in 1990 and has not recovered. Today, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reports that every one of the world's major fishing areas has either reached or exceeded its natural limits – and that nine of them are in serious decline.

The North Sea, once one of the world's richest marine areas, has been savagely affected. Every year, the industry sucks up more than half of the cod and haddock left there. Nearly three-quarters of young cod are caught before they have even started to mature. The stock of mackerel has crashed fifty-fold since the 60s, and fishing for herring had to be stopped altogether from 1977 to 1982.

Pollution and the destruction of wetlands – where fish breed – have made things worse. Sales of fish keep increasing, aided by consumer concerns about health, and scares such as the beef crisis. But the stocks are running down, as boats move into new areas, fish new species and compete ever more fiercely. Temperatures are rising. And so, inevitably, are prices.

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The irresistible rise of Bibi

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

In the early hours of yesterday morning, he was being written off. Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu, implored by a sense of his own charisma, fell into a well and caused the collapse of the Likud party," wrote one of Israel's better-known newspaper columnists.

By the time that newspaper appeared in print, it had all changed. Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu looked set to become the next prime minister of Israel, if only by a whisker. His lead of 20,000 votes out of 3.9 million cast, but the 154,000 votes still to be counted are mostly those of soldiers expected to vote for the right.

Just for a moment, as the first exit polls were announced – giving the lead to Shimon Peres, the Israeli prime minister – Mr Netanyahu's easy self-confidence evaporated and his face turned white. But he has survived crises before, such as when Leah Rabin, the widow of murdered prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, denounced him after her husband's funeral. There was talk of replacing him as party leader when his rating in the polls fell 20 per cent behind Mr Peres late last year.



Yet there is something unstoppable about this man. In 1993, he appeared on television to admit that he had had an affair; his political opponents were trying to blackmail him by threatening to release a video showing him in a compromising position with his girlfriend. Yet despite this, despite three marriages, it was the black-clad ultra-Orthodox Jews who flocked to the polls this week to give him victory. He was damaged by the assassination of Mr Rabin and accused of rabble-rousing speeches before the murder; but he rebounded in the polls after four suicide bombs exploded in February and March in Israel killing 63 people.

He has had little help in this election. Yasser Arafat, the leader of the PLO, gave such assistance to his opponent as he

could. President Bill Clinton all but campaigned against Mr Netanyahu. The Israeli media regards him with suspicion and distaste. Above all else, his success will cause dismay because nobody knows if he is a committed ideologue or a successful opportunist.

Certainly, his family background is one of ideological commitment. He is the son of Benzion Netanyahu, an histo-

rian whose commitment to extreme right-wing Zionism forced him to leave Israel for a job in the United States. He became a senior diplomat in Washington and New York, famed for his facility on television in Hebrew or English, known for his links to America's conservative right.

What will Mr Netanyahu do now? He will not withdraw from Hebron, or discuss Jerusalem with the Palestinians, as agreed under the Oslo accords. He says he will build more settlements in the West Bank. The peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, which began in 1993, are effectively over. He says he will not give up the Golan Heights.

But he is unlikely to do more unless there are more suicide bombs. He will have little difficulty forming a government because of the success of the right in the Knesset. He will want to restore relations between himself and the US. But the blunt truth is that – as would be the case were it Mr Peres who had triumphed – Mr Netanyahu will find it difficult to do anything in a country that is so demonstrably split down the middle.

Knife-edge vote, pages 14-15

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news

Man dies in 'road rage' shooting

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

A motorist has been shot dead in what is believed to be the second "road rage" murder in eight days.

The attack, in which one man died and another was shot in the face, followed a high speed chase which is believed to have been prompted by a minor accident in which two cars bumped into each other in north London.

The murder comes shortly after the stabbing to death of Stephen Cameron, 21, who was killed during an argument with

a motorist on a sliproad of the M25 junction at Swanley, Kent, on 19 May. There is increasing concern about road rage, in which frustrated motorists go berserk and strike out.

In the latest incident the killer is believed to have waved a gun from the window of his car as he chased three men in their vehicle for about a mile.

At first the police believed the incident, which happened at about 11pm on Monday, was most likely a drug shooting, but after interviewing witnesses they now think it was inspired by road rage.

The case began after a minor collision at a junction of Seven Sisters Road and Woodberry Grove, Haringey between a red Mitsubishi car and a "sports type" car. The Mitsubishi suffered slight damage. Witnesses said that the three men in the Mitsubishi failed to stop.

The second car gave chase and began waving what was described as a "stick" out of the window - police believe this was probably a gun.

The Mitsubishi driver fled at high speed, and believing that the pursuer had been shaken off, parked in nearby Surrey

Gardens, Manor House, north London. But the three men, all of whom were born in Ghana, were then confronted by a white man who entered the street on foot after parking around the corner. An argument began about the damage to the white man's car.

The man produced a handgun from his pocket or waistband and shot one of the car's two passengers - a 41-year-old man - in the chin.

He then shot a second passenger twice in the head. The 35-year-old victim, a Ghanaian holidaymaker, died instantly.

The Mitsubishi driver was also threatened by the gunman, but he ran away and managed to escape into open land.

The injured passenger was treated in hospital and released the following day.

The gunman is described as white, in his mid-thirties, about 5ft 8ins tall and well-built. He spoke with a London accent.

Sandy Myles, 47, was in his home nearby at the time of the shooting. He said: "I looked out and saw a group of men shouting and yelling. It was one huge row."

"After looking out the front

door I dialled 999. The argument then shifted to the other end of the road and I could see there were 10, maybe more, people involved.

"As I opened the front door I heard one gunshot.

"I slammed the door shut, then rang the police again and as I was doing so there were another two shots."

Poole are appealing for witnesses and are keen to establish the make and model of the vehicle involved.

The police are continuing their search for the killer of Stephen Cameron.

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Water customers are to get legal rights to claim compensation if supplies are interrupted as a result of Drought Orders being imposed; John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, announced yesterday. Domestic consumers may also be entitled to compensation if water pressure is inadequate, while business customers may be able to claim payment for losses incurred because of emergency restrictions being introduced.

Mr Gummer was responding to a report from the water regulator, Ofwat, calling on the Government to introduce legislation at the earliest opportunity. At present, consumers are not entitled to claim compensation under the industry's Guaranteed Standards Scheme if supplies are restricted or cut off in areas where Drought Orders are in force, Ian Bryant, director-general of Water Services, said.

This loophole should be closed. This would allow householders to claim £10 for every day that supplies were interrupted up to a maximum of the water company's average domestic bill. The average domestic bill nation-wide is £218, but in the South-west, where charges are the highest in the country, it is £220. Michael Harrison

The offspring of Irish migrants to England and Wales suffer more illness and die sooner than the general population, according to new research which says an unhealthy lifestyle, including excess smoking and drinking, may be to blame. Previous research has shown that first generation Irish immigrants have a death rate which is 30 per cent higher for men and 20 per cent higher for women, than the average for England and Wales. The fact that their offspring also appears unhealthier than the general population is a cause for concern, according to a paper published today in the *British Medical Journal*.

Researchers from the Office for National Statistics and the Institute of Public Health at the University of Surrey in Guildford, conclude: "With over 2 million second generation Irish and growing numbers of a third generation, clearly special consideration should be given to their health." Dr Huw

A national campaign against bullying yesterday called on the Government to amend the Parents' Charter to give parents and children a guarantee that complaints about bullying will be taken seriously. The call was made by Childline at the launch in London of its new report - titled *Why Me?* - which includes the results of a study carried out among children and in schools. The findings revealed that bullying in schools is still rife and that violent bullying, especially of boys, may be increasing.

Childline's chairman, Esther Rantzen, said: "At last the myth that bullying is good for you, that it is character-forming, has been exploded. Bullying isn't good for anyone. It is a major cause of truancy. It destroys the victim's capacity to learn and enjoy school. And in extreme cases it can even lead to suicide - around 10 children every year kill themselves because they are bullied." Peter Victor

The debt-ridden Alexandra Palace site in north London is to become home to a multiplex cinema in an attempt to make it commercially viable, under plans expected to be endorsed by Haringey council last night. The development consortium, led by Champions Leisure, McAlpine and Pilar Property, also intends to build a bowling alley, high-technology simulation rides and a tennis centre on the 123-acre landmark at Muswell Hill.

Earlier this month Haringey, acting as trustee of the palace and park, accepted liability for £50m of the £55m losses on the redevelopment and running of the park since it took over from the Greater London Council in 1980. Nigel Willmott, chairman of the Alexandra Palace and Park Board, said: "This is an important step towards securing the long term future of Ally Pally. In the meantime existing business at the Palace is brisk." Paul Field

A private security firm is to patrol GP surgeries in Birmingham and provide protection for doctors and their staff from violent patients, as part of a new campaign to reduce the incidence of assault, burglaries, and vandalism. It follows mounting concern about the dangers doctors face each day, and the spiralling cost of security measures and building insurance premiums for their inner-city surgeries. So far 10 practices have signed up for the scheme which will cost £3,500 a year. Birmingham Health Authority will meet 90 per cent of the costs of the service provided by the Group 4 Total Security Force.

Malvin Henry, a spokesman for the health authority said: "The cost of measures such as alarms, fencing and lighting at GP practices has doubled in the last two years. This unique project is in response to that. We hope this initiative will reduce the risk to GPs, staff and patients, as well as providing a vital out-of-hours deterrent." Liz Hunt

Scientists were invited last night to submit proposals for investigations into Gulf War Syndrome. The move by the Medical Research Council was the latest step in the Ministry of Defence's programme to investigate illnesses suffered by veterans of the 1991 Gulf war.

Advertisements will be placed in leading science journals asking for proposals to examine two crucial areas: Whether British veterans suffer more ill-health because of Gulf service and, if so, the nature and extent of the risk and whether there are increased reproductive health problems in veterans and, if so, the nature and prevalence of the problems. Peter Victor

More than one-third of children in England and Wales were born outside wedlock last year as people continued to reject the idea of getting married before starting a family. A total of 33.9 per cent of live births occurred outside marriage in 1995, according to the Office for National Statistics. The figure was up slightly from 1994, when 32.4 per cent of children had parents who were not married. Experts say the trend reflects a shift in social and sexual attitudes in the last 10 years. In 1985, only 19.2 per cent of children were born illegitimate.

The Marquess of Bristol earned more than £50,000 yesterday by selling off eight lordships of the manor. But the prices made by his nine lots - one of which failed to reach its reserve - totalled £45,000 paid by an anonymous bidder for the Lordship of Brighton, and £30,000 for an obscure barony in Ireland. The Marquess, 41, once jailed for possession of heroin and cocaine, was selling his titles to help fund a new life in the Bahamas.

A loaf of bread, believed to have been found in the ashes of the Great Fire of London, was sold for £322 at a Sotheby's auction in Somerset yesterday. The bread was catalogued as "carbonised" and had been expected to fetch £20-£50. It has been part of an array of "eccentricities" collected by Robert Holland-Martin, chairman of March's Bank, a Prime Warden of the Fishmongers' Company, and governor of Guy's Hospital, who died in 1944.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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Greece	Switzerland	£10.20
Luxembourg	USA	£10.20

Sinn Fein rolls in to the polls with money and men

David McKittrick follows the election trail in west Belfast

If manpower and methodical organisation are the keys to success in elections, then in west Belfast at least Sinn Fein are set to do well in the Northern Ireland poll.

Outside polling stations in the republican heartlands of Ballymurphy and Springfield sat little caravans containing two or three Sinn Fein workers. Many voters made their way to them before going into the polling stations, standing in a queue to hand in their voting cards.

Inside the caravans Sinn Fein workers had large pieces of cardboard with voting registers sellotaped to them, street by street. As the people handed in their cards their addresses were found in Glenalvin Park, Britton's Parade and Ballymurphy Crescent, and carefully underlined. Other mysterious marks were added with a green highlighter.

The caravans, festooned with posters, pictures of Gerry Adams and tricolour flags, provided a splash of colour on a dull, wet day. But security precautions were in evidence too: the registration numbers were covered up with black bin-bags.

Up in Andersonstown came the media event of the day as



Making a mark: A voter and his son in the Springfield Road area of west Belfast yesterday. Photograph: Brian Harris

Gerry Adams arrived to cast his vote at Holy Child primary school. Locals craned their necks for a glimpse, but he was engulfed in a scrum of American, European and Japanese camera crews. If he said anything of significance in the scrum he said it to America, Europe and Japan, not to Belfast.

Across the peace line in Protestant Ballygormartin, a middle-aged woman emerged from Forth River primary school complaining of the long list of Unionist parties on the ballot paper. "Talk about confusing in there," she shook her head. "Progressive Unionists, Ulster Unionists and all the rest - I knew beforehand who I wanted to vote for but still it was confusing. When I saw that big list I was thrown a bit."

Here there are no caravans and fewer workers. There are two men from the new Ulster Democratic Party dressed, oddly, in identical dark green dou-

ble-breasted suits, and a small bouncy woman from the Progressive Unionist Party, which is said, in the latest journalistic euphemism, to be familiar to the thinking of the paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force.

She turned out to be Tracey Gould, an executive member of the PUP. "We need your vote to get us round the table," she tells

those on their way into the polling station. What makes her think talks would work?

"Because I think the smaller parties like us are more realistic about what we need to do. We need to respect each other's culture - gone are the days of the old Stormont and the old power base, the Protestant su-

periority. Half a mile away in Woodvale beads turned at another polling station as bagpipe music was heard. A car with an excellent loudspeaker system zoomed round the corner, pulled up at the station and out jumped the Rev Eric Smyth, the Paisleyite lord mayor of Belfast. He helped out an elderly man and then zoomed off again in an

other jaunty skirt of pipes. Some PUP people shook their heads in wonder as they heard of Sinn Fein's level of organisation. "I suppose we'd be organised too if we had a million dollars from America," one woman said ruefully, contemplating her handful of leaflets, damp from the Belfast drizzle.

DONALD MACINTYRE
Political Editor

Douglas Hurd, the former Foreign Secretary, last night issued a sharp warning to senior Tory Euro-sceptics that their goal of subordinating European law to national law "in all circumstances" would mean saying "goodbye to the single market".

In a further sign of a fight-back by pro-European Tories,

WAR WITH BRUSSELS

Mr Hurd pointed out that it was Baroness Thatcher who had been "quite right" to agree to a "substantial degree of qualified majority voting to the single market in motion."

He said there was no case for extending the powers of the Commission and the European Court are essential if we are to achieve a full single market".

governments can operate effectively on their own." But he added: "In the field of the single market, the Commission and the Court are the allies of those who want the playing field to be level. We should help them to move further and faster."

Mr Hurd's remarks about the importance of the European Court to progress on the single market will be seen in the Tory party as a rebuke to those ranging from John Redwood to Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, who have argued for moves to drastically reduce the reach of European law.

Mr Redwood yesterday repeated his call for a declaration that Parliament was superior to European law. Mr Howard has been arguing behind the scenes for an amendment to the 1972 European Communities Act to remove the obligation on

British courts to enforce European law.

In arguing that more needed to be done to liberalise the internal market, Mr Hurd cited the example of public procurement contracts, which were "too often skewed, for example in Germany, in favour of the local firm." He added: "There is still too much bureaucracy in the European and national standards organisations."

Vets' guidelines cheer British ministers

CHARLES ARTHUR AND DONALD MACINTYRE

Ministers were cheered yesterday when their efforts to gain a partial lifting of the European beef ban next week were boosted by new guidelines on beef and beef products from an international body of vets.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), including chief veterinary officers from 117 countries, yesterday released a report saying that there is no proof of any risk of mad cow disease, or Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, from trading in semen from healthy bulls, and that properly processed gelatine, collagen and tallow from cattle are harmless. The WOAH also said that there is no reason to ban exports of British cattle or beef - as long as particular safety measures are taken. But it did support an "absolute ban" on the export of suspect organs now excluded by law - a result whose significance would be political rather than financial.

For Britain to win its case, France and Germany would have to agree that the products - which generate about £40m of export revenues - pose no threat of BSE.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) welcomed the report, saying that it was "a clear endorsement of the UK position on BSE" and that it "again shows that the EU export ban is entirely unjustified". MAFF also highlighted the fact that the WOAH report did not call for mass slaughter of cattle.

In a clear sign that Euro-sceptic Tories will demand substantial concessions from the EU for a "framework" for total lifting on the ban after next week, James Cran, MP for Beverley, said that the EU were trying to raise the stakes.

In a warning to Mr Major not to let up on his policy of non-cooperation with EU business, Mr Cran added: "The secret is that the Prime Minister must not blink. And I do not think he will. We have got to fight our corner. There is no way back."

warded in compliance with a commission request on Wednesday. A spokesman said that at this stage the commission had asked only for details of the levels of phthalates found and the methodology used by British researchers.

Experts in Brussels began evaluating a report supplied by the Government yesterday but said they would need at least 48 hours to decide if the findings represent a health risk.

Other member states would be entitled to invoke public health safeguards in the EU

tests to ban imports of the brands tested if the commission alerts them to an "urgent or imminent" risk, he added.

The baby milk scare could be placed on the agenda of the EU Scientific Committee for Food which is scheduled to meet next week if either the commission or another government thinks action at EU level is justified.

The commission sought information from Britain under its rapid reaction system for health scares. This obliges member states to report to Brussels on serious problems within 24 hours so it can assess whether citizens in other parts of the EU are at risk.

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Thornton free after jury clears her of murder

Verdict fails to resolve legal issues of domestic violence. Will Bennett reports

Sara Thornton walked free from court yesterday after a jury found her not guilty of murdering her alcoholic husband, but convicted her of manslaughter.

Her case had become a cause célèbre for women's groups because Thornton, 41, said that her husband, Malcolm, beat her up regularly. It put the issue of reforming the law on domestic violence firmly on the political agenda.

Thornton said after yesterday's verdict: "I am too tired to feel a sense of victory and there has been too much pain and at the end of the day, Malcolm died."

But the verdict after a 12-day trial at Oxford Crown Court, ordered by the Court of Appeal, did nothing to resolve the issue of how the courts should deal with women driven to kill by repeated domestic violence.

Mr Justice Scott Baker sentenced Thornton to five years imprisonment for manslaughter, but said that the outcome was the result of evidence that she was suffering from a severe personality disorder rather than a question of provocation.

He told Thornton: "I sentence you on the basis that your responsibility for killing your husband was diminished by your abnormality of mind."

Thornton showed no emotion as the jury of eight men and four women returned their verdict after deliberating for six hours and staying overnight in a hotel. She silently mouthed "I love you" to her daughter Louise moments before the jury foreman announced its decision.

Louise, 18, and Barbara Garver, Thornton's sister, wept with relief at the verdict.

Across the court Malcolm Thornton's family looked shocked and disappointed by the decision. Gladys Sothers, his sister, burst into tears.

The judge's sentence meant that Thornton could walk free as she had already served five and a half years of a life sentence imposed in 1990 when she was convicted at her first trial of murdering her husband.

"I do not think that you represent a continuing danger to the public and the sentence I am going to pass will not mean that you have to return to prison," the judge told her.

Thornton never denied killing her husband but claimed that she stabbed him accidentally after a row as he lay drunk on the sofa of their home in Athertonstone, Warwickshire, in 1989. The prosecution claimed that she was a "pathological liar" who killed him for financial reasons.

She lost her first appeal but what had been a domestic murder case which had passed largely unnoticed was taken up by women's groups campaigning for a change in the way courts deal with domestic violence cases.

A high-profile campaign followed which culminated in a second appeal hearing last December, at which her lawyers said that she was a victim of "battered woman syndrome" as a result of her husband's repeated violence, which caused her to lose control and kill him.

The Court of Appeal quashed the murder conviction and ordered a retrial. But the question of battered woman syndrome played little part in her second trial, during which much attention was paid to her personality disorder.

Psychiatrists told the court that Thornton suffers from a condition called dissociation, which causes her to react inappropriately to events and tell people what she thinks they want to hear.



Helping hands: Sara Thornton outside court with her relatives after yesterday's verdict

After the verdict yesterday, Mrs Sothers said: "We basically think that the jury has bowed to feminist pressure. No one could have stood up to that."

Jean Murray, another of Mr Thornton's sisters, added: "It has cleared Malcolm's name in

that she has not proved that she was a battered wife. She has just proved that she has an abnormality of mind."

But Thornton said later: "We don't know how the jury found for manslaughter, whether it was for provocation or for diminished responsibility. They did come back and ask questions on provocation and so obviously the issue was uppermost in their minds."

She said that she thought the verdict and the sentence were fair and added: "I am not say-

ing that every woman should be sent to prison, but for me it was fair. I took a life at the end of the day."

As for her future, Thornton said she planned to write a book: "I have a vision of prisons as places of history rather than punishment. Prison was a healing place for me."

Asked about her conscience, she said: "I'm very, very judgemental of myself, probably more than anybody else. Forgive myself? Not yet."

Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Trial forced plight of battered wives into the open

We will never know quite what went through the jury's mind when they brought in yesterday's verdict on Sara Thornton. And after two appeals and two trials there will remain those convinced that Thornton is a calculating killer and those equally convinced that she was more sinned against than sinner.

What is not in doubt, however, is that it was her case, her imprisonment, her hunger-strike protest and her campaign that put the plight of battered women firmly on the agenda, forcing senior judges to acknowledge that the law often did not deal fairly between men and women.

Since domestic violence accounts for one in four of all recorded violent crimes, the fight is not over. But Thornton and others in similar positions have benefited from greater understanding, inside and outside the courts. In two other high-pro-

file cases – Kiranjit Alhwalia, who burnt to death a husband who had tortured her for 10 years, and Emma Humphreys, who killed her violent boyfriend – murder convictions were reduced to manslaughter by the Court of Appeal.

For the first time appeal judges were taking into account the cumulative effects of sustained violence on the killers. The difference in approach was crucial because it amounted to the judiciary acknowledging battered women's syndrome for the first time, and deciding what effect this would have had on a woman's behaviour.

The shift in attitude is none the less limited, and it remains the case that a man is more likely to be able to run the defence of provocation than a woman.

People who kill can claim self-defence, diminished responsibility or provocation in their

defence. For the battered wife, provocation would seem the most obvious, but while the Alhwalia and Humphreys cases have tilted the law a little more in favour of abused women, it remains a rule that there must be a "sudden and temporary" loss of control. A man is often more inclined to lose control in that way – and to possess the physical strength to give immediate vent to it.

Where there is any delay between the provocation and the response the defence is far trickier. Courts have maintained that any delay is a cooling-off period. Lawyers and women's groups seek to widen the definition, insisting that for women it is the complete opposite, a "boiling over" period.

So provocation can lead to the acquittal of a man who suddenly snaps, even if the trigger is something trivial – as in the case of Thomas Corlett, who killed his wife after she moved the mustard pot to the wrong side of the table and was sentenced to three years for manslaughter. Or Joseph McGrail, who at the same time as Thornton killed her alcoholic husband, killed his alcoholic common law wife. He was given a suspended sentence by a judge who said the woman "would have tried the patience of a saint".

There might not have been such a need for the debate on the finer legal definitions of provocation or diminished responsibility if courts could reflect circumstances in

sentencing. The Thornton affair has equally illustrated the shortcomings of the mandatory life sentence for murder, which meant she had to receive the same sentence as a hit-man or terrorist who kills dozens.

Senior judges, led by Lord Taylor the outgoing Lord Chief Justice, and numbers of peers, lawyers and academics believe that the inflexibility of the law on homicide is bringing the justice system into disrepute.

Lord Lane, the former Lord Chief Justice not noted for particularly liberal views, said he "cannot believe there is public support" for a law which treats a terrorist who kills with a bomb in the same way as a doctor or relative who helps in a mercy killing or a battered wife

who kills her husband. "There is a huge range of murder and to lump them all together and give them the same sentence is wrong," he has said.

But Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, has made clear his view that murder, no matter what the motive, is so serious that it must carry a life penalty. It is an open question whether an incoming Labour government would risk sending a different message to the public.

In the meantime, domestic violence remains a serious social problem. It is true that legal and cultural attitudes have moved on. The police are not so prone to treat cases of wife-battering as "domestic" in which they should not intervene. The 1976 domestic violence legislation and the increased use of court injunctions have provided some degree of protection. A special five-judge Court of Appeal

made history in 1991 by ruling that husbands could be found guilty of raping their wives. That swept away a centuries-old immunity for violent husbands, dating from a 1736 statement by Sir Matthew Hale, the Chief Justice, that "by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given herself in this kind unto her husband which she cannot retract".

But the latest research suggests that one in four women has been the victim of some kind of abuse. Sandra Horley, a senior psychologist and chief executive of Refuge, has called for a co-ordinated initiative – with education and training, greater support and counselling, more refuges, and a tough line from the police and courts to deal with the abusers.

Then, conceivably, we would be dealing with so many domestic killings in the courts.

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By contrast the first witness for the defence was Thornton's sister Billi Garver, who now lives in California. She cried as she told the court how she found her sister lying in a pool of blood after a suicide attempt. There was a softness in her voice as she mentioned Thornton's extreme behaviour and mood swings.

A few feet from the Coopers, across the aisle of the public gallery, which seemed to represent an unbridgeable divide, sat Louise, Thornton's 18-year-old daughter from her first marriage, who lives with Mrs Garver and has always supported her mother. The two factors did not acknowledge one another.

MoD makes a mint from sale of Gulf war gold coins

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Defence Correspondent

You've read the book, you've seen the film, now buy the souvenir coin issue.

A million pounds' worth of gold sovereigns issued to RAF aircrew and SAS men who might have been captured behind Iraqi lines during the Gulf War and need to buy their way out of trouble, are to be sold by the MoD to raise money. It emerged yesterday that the presentation packs will be signed

by General Sir Peter de la Billière, who is widely blamed for starting an avalanche of books and television programmes about the SAS. The news has further angered members of the forces who blame Sir Peter for compromising the SAS my-

tique.

In certain parts of the world, only gold will do. Whereas the warring factions in Bosnia were keen to steal credit cards, in the desert, gold says more than American Express ever can. The coins were carried by air-

crew and SAS men and taped into their clothing, perhaps to persuade Bedouin tribesmen to send them back to the allied forces without performing traditional desert customs, which could include castration. Each man carried 20 coins.

The MoD purchased the 60,000 gold coins from the Bank of England in January 1991, just before the conflict erupted, for about £60 each. The real value of the 22-carat gold coins will fluctuate with the price of gold. Instead of selling

them back to the bank of England, the MoD decided it could make more money by selling them in presentation packs.

Gold coins are a standard part of "Escape and Evasion" equipment – survival kit "for individuals who might find themselves at special risk or particularly vulnerable to capture behind enemy lines", the MoD said, they will make another order.

As a Lieutenant General, Sir Peter, who had served in the SAS, was the senior British officer in Saudi Arabia during the 1991 Gulf War. Sources told the *Independent* his signature on the presentation pack would attest that the coins had been to the Gulf and back.

"They are standard bullion sovereigns – they weren't minded specially for the occasion or anything like that," sources told the *Independent*.

A huge proportion of them were obviously issued to troops and airmen, because they've got the sticky tape from the tape they used to stick them to the webbing still on them."

The liquidity of solid gold coins has long made them an attractive means of exchange, even after the introduction of banknotes, travellers' cheques

and credit cards. In the film of *From Russia with Love*, James Bond reveals he is carrying gold sovereigns in his briefcase.

With paper currencies fluctuating wildly, Special Operations Executive commandos who raided the Nazi missile base at Peenemuende in the Second World War took gold sovereigns with them as means of persuasion if captured.

The Curator of the Royal Engineers' Museum at Chatham recalled the story of a young Engineer officer sent to Egypt

just after the turn of the century to map the Nile Delta. He took quantities of gold to hire horses and staff. His drawings of Egyptian temples were so brilliant they instigated a stream of protest against the Government's plan to flood the delta.

Gold sovereigns may be on the way out. "We've opened up quite a few offices in the new states of the former Soviet Union and so on in the past few years", the Foreign Office said.

"But they haven't gone off with bags full of gold sovereigns".

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Drinkers to get extra time as laws are relaxed

GLENDA COOPER

Drinkers could be given an extra hour to drink up in pubs and clubs over weekends by the end of the summer if new Home Office proposals go ahead.

The move, backed by police, is designed to bring drinking laws up to date for the 1990s. While drinking laws were radically revised in 1988 when all day drinking was introduced, some laws still date back to First World War attempts to curb drunkenness in vital munitions factories.

Under the new proposals laid out in a Home Office consultation document, pubs would be permitted to serve alcohol until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays and registered clubs could add an hour to their late licences. Landlords would have to apply individually, giving magistrates absolute discretion over granting or refusing licences.

Tim Kirkhope, a Home Office Minister, said: "We need licensing laws that reflect the leisure needs of today and give people the opportunity to spend their money when they want to."

"My proposals represent a further sensible and measured relaxation of licensing hours on what are the most popular nights of the week for enjoying a drink in the local pub. They also allow for responsible control by licensing authorities."

The new proposals, out for consultation until 30 August, will please brewers but may cause concern in the wider community in towns and cities

already plagued by trouble at pub turning-out time.

A spokesman for the Brewers and Licensed Retailers' Association said: "We think it is good news for many pub customers. Longer hours do not lead to more drunkenness, but the very opposite is true. People can drink in a more relaxed manner and choose to drink when they want."

And the police do not believe the plans will cause major problems. Keith Povey, Leicestershire's Chief Constable and a member of the Association of Chief Police Officers, said: "The Police Service supports measured relaxation in the present licensing regime. The consultation is a welcome development and the proposals will be given favourable consideration by Acpo."

Dr John Rae, director of the Portman Group which was set up by the drinks industry to promote sensible drinking, said: "I don't think an hour of drinking will lead to more drunkenness and disorder. My view is these things depend on how well a pub is managed, the local authority's attitude to public transport, how well the sensible drinking message has got across."

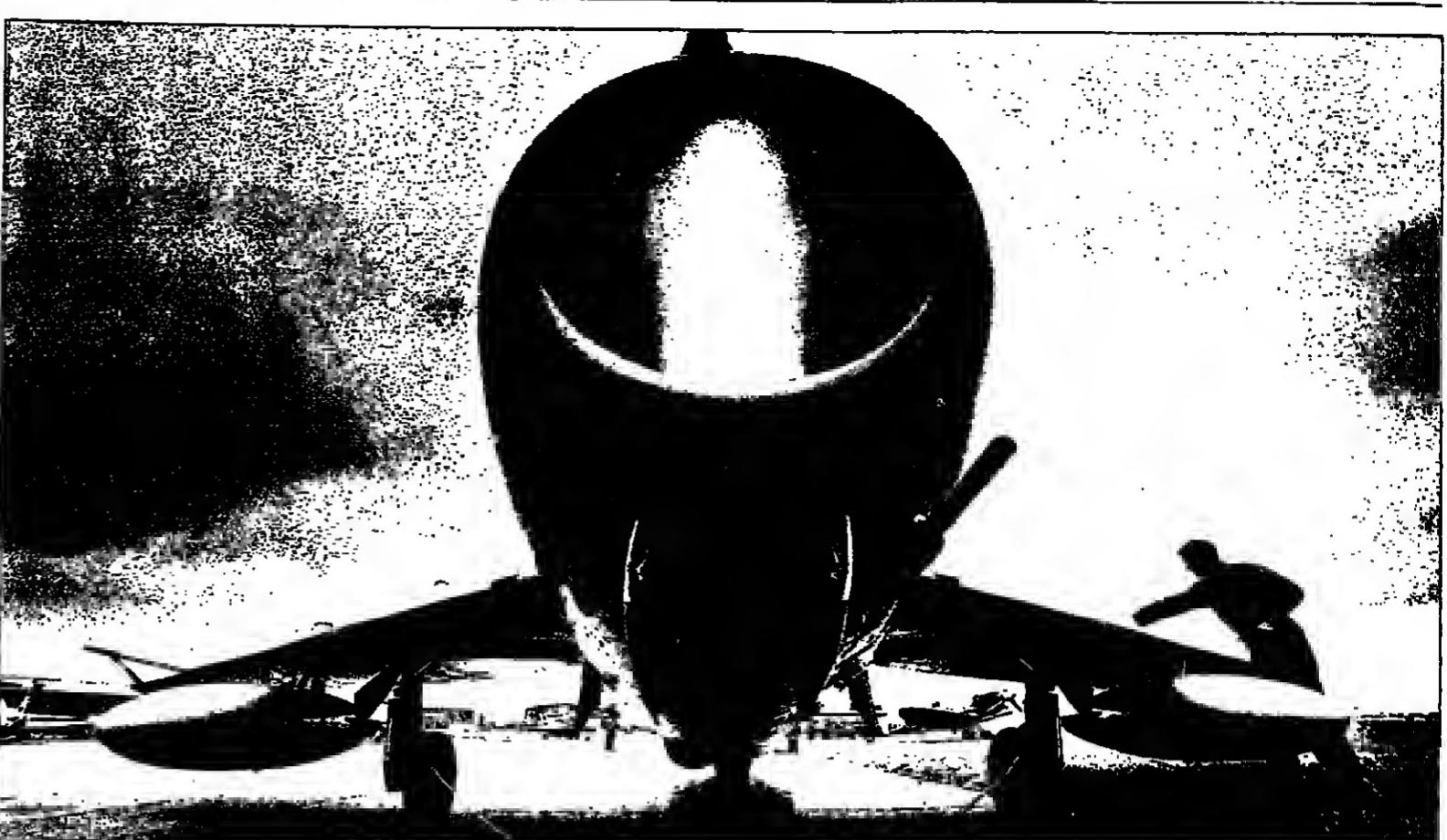
But a spokesman for Alcohol Concern said: "Our feeling is that it would delay the problems surrounding closing-out time, with people spilling on to the streets an hour or more later than usual. It would also be more difficult to get public transport. It's hard enough at normal closing time but it would be even harder at midnight, which might encourage more

people to take their cars to the pub. It also might make people knock back a bit more than they would normally do."

A spokeswoman for the Methodist Church, which has long warned of the evils of alcohol, agreed that longer opening hours could encourage heavy drinkers to drink more.

Research shows that one in four men drink too much and that 38 per cent of young men between 18 and 24 drink more than the recommended amount each week," she said.

"We would be concerned that longer opening hours would spur them on to drink even more. The heavy-drinking minority are the people who make the trouble."



Poised for flight: A MiG-15 jet of the type used in combat against the United States in the Korean war 45 years ago ready for Sunday's Classic Jet and Fighter Display organised by the Old Flying Machine Company at Duxford Airfield, Cambridgeshire

Photograph: Brian Hems

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Safety drives fail to dent road deaths toll

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

The death toll on Britain's roads remained virtually the same in 1995 as the previous year, ending a series of sharp declines. The figures will disappoint road safety campaigners and will provide ammunition for those seeking more radical measures to be taken against speeding motorists.

In 1995, 3,621 people died on Britain's roads compared with 3,650 in 1994. While this is again a record low since statistics were first collected in 1926, the very small reduction suggests that the figures are bottoming out at a level which the roads minister, Steven Norris, said still means "nearly 10 people a day are dying in road accidents". Between 1989 and 1994, deaths went down sharply each year, reducing from 5,373 to 3,650.

Provisional figures issued in March had indicated a slight increase in the number of deaths, but the Department of Transport said yesterday that these earlier figures had been based on inflated estimates in some areas. Serious injuries were down by 2 per cent to 45,523, while slight injuries re-

duced by 1 per cent to 261,362. In 1987, the Government adopted a target to reduce road casualties by one-third from the average during the 1980s. While this target has been met for fatalities and serious injuries, slight injuries are 8 per cent above the baseline figure.

Pedestrian deaths went down by 8 per cent to 1,032 and pedestrian casualties decreased by 3 per cent. This is partly explained by a reduction in walking revealed in other surveys as more and more people use cars even for very short journeys.

The number of cyclists killed on the roads rose to 213, an increase of a quarter on 1994, but this may be explained by an increase in the number of people using bikes. It is still well below the early 1980s average of 312.

The end of the declining trend has led the Government to launch a hard-hitting campaign against speeding motorists, who are thought to be responsible for one-third of road deaths.

However, there was criticism yesterday because the Department of Transport has decided to stop issuing quarterly statistics on road casualties "because of financial cutbacks".

British men are less fertile than Finns

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

Fears about declining sperm quality and quantity nationally could be justified. This is suggested by a study showing Finnish men are more fertile than their British peers.

The Finns are known to have the highest sperm counts in the world and appear to have escaped the falling sperm counts and abnormalities of the reproductive tract which are being reported from the rest of Europe. These have been linked with chemicals, such as the phthalates at the centre of the baby milk row, which mimic the female hormone oestrogen.

However, the new study speculates that the "Finnish exception" to falling sperm rates may be due to lower rates of maternal smoking in Finland compared with the rest of Europe.

The study by Dr Michael Joffe, a senior lecturer in public health at Imperial College, London, is significant because it assessed how long it took cou-

ples to get pregnant as a measure of fertility, rather than sperm counts or motility which are difficult to compare.

"It is the first time that someone has shown a change in fertility as well as a change in sperm quality," Dr Joffe said yesterday.

To test the hypothesis that Finnish males are more fertile than British males, Dr Joffe compared "time to pregnancy" data from two different studies in each country carried out between the early 1980s and 1991.

According to a report in tomorrow's issue of the *Lancet*, fertility was statistically significantly greater in Finland than Britain. Dr Joffe concludes: "The previously reported difference in sperm counts between Finland and elsewhere in north-west Europe is probably not artefactual, suggesting that the reported worldwide decline in semen quality is also real."

Dr Joffe said more research was needed to establish the reasons for the differences in male fertility between Finland and the rest of Europe.

news

Head Teachers' conference: As Labour turns its back on progressive education, schools crave hard cash to improve standards

Blunkett treads a bumpy road to reform

David Blunkett must have felt relieved yesterday when his call for a return to traditional teaching methods in primary schools was received with polite restraint by head teachers. Three years ago, when John Patten, then Secretary of State for Education, delivered a similar message he was booted.

The warmer reception which greeted Mr Blunkett at this year's National Association of Head Teachers' conference was due in part to the fact that he is not yet in power, and the calls which Mr Patten faced owed something to the profession's frustration over issues such as testing, league tables, and the National Curriculum.

But the intervening years have also seen a sea-change in classrooms which Labour's education spokesman must have known would work in his favour. In 1993 the Government's "Three Wise Men" report on primary school teaching methods had just recommended the increase in whole-class teaching, phonics and streaming which Mr Blunkett now advocates. At the time, teachers were angered by the suggestion from educationalists

Analysis

Chris Woodhead, Robin Alexander and Jim Rose that their reluctance to abandon the progressive style of the 1960s had caused pupils to fail.

They maintained that they had always used a mixture of methods, and to an extent they were right. But despite the profession's initial resistance the ideological pendulum has begun to swing back in favour of traditional teaching. Primary teachers are more likely to deliver their lessons to a whole class, rather than allowing children to work in groups and children are more likely to be put into sets according to ability.

So Mr Blunkett, whose decision to set out guidance on teaching methods contrasts sharply with his party's earlier *laissez-faire* attitude, is pushing at a door which is already half-open. He knows, though, that he is entering a debate which has raged fiercely for more than three decades, and he has done his homework. His researches have taken him back to the Plowden Report of 1967,

which he criticised yesterday for promoting progressive methods and clouding the importance of direct teaching. He has noted that as early as 1982 primary schools were being urged to sharpen up their practice in the teaching of maths. And he has pointed out that research published a decade ago highlighted gains in achievement between schools with very similar intakes.

He has been careful not to lay all the blame for failures in lit-

eracy and numeracy at the door of the teaching profession, though. He has blamed the Government for failing to spread good practice and for allowing the National Curriculum to squeeze out the basics.

The road he has chosen, however, is a bumpy one. Two groups, both vocal and determined, are bound to protest.

The teacher trainers, accused by Mr Blunkett of turning out recruits who cannot teach the

basics or control a class, will argue that problems in primary schools have more to do with under-funding and a series of Government initiatives than with sub-standard training or an attachment to 1960s ideology.

There is also an element in the teaching profession which will remain deeply sceptical. Many teachers still believe that education is about exploration and discovery rather than about cramming facts into heads.

They will be no more willing to respond to a Labour Party which they believe has put on Conservatives' clothing than they have been to the pressures exerted by the Government.

For now, most teachers are reserving judgement until they see what a Labour government will do. Their overriding concern is that more money should be put into education, and they will be much more ready to listen to arguments about what

they do in their classrooms if they have the books and resources they need.

Mr Blunkett should not assume that the heads' muted response yesterday was a sign of approval. If he does not have some hard cash in his back pocket by the time he visits next year's conference, he should prepare himself for a rough ride.

FRAN ABRAMS
Education Correspondent

Schools inspectors are earning up to £80,000 per year and can take as much as 18 weeks holiday, a head-teachers' leader said yesterday, writes Fran Abrams.

David Hart, General Secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, attacked the payments as "grossly inflated" and accused the Government of allowing school inspections to become a gravy train.

Some head teachers who were planning to retire this term and become inspectors would be able to add their £15,000-per-year pensions to these earnings along with a lump sum, he added.

He told his association's annual conference in Torquay that the Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Woodhead, had confirmed that a registered inspector or team leader could make a profit of around £4,500 on each inspection. By carrying out 17 one-week inspections per year and by restricting preparation and report writing to one week, an inspector could earn three times the salary of a primary-school head, he said, adding: "This just demonstrates the crass standards we have ... in our education system."

Privatised teams now bid for contracts to carry out inspections under a programme designed to cover every school in England by 1998.

Margaret Morrissey, spokeswoman for the National Association of Lay Inspectors, denied that the job was overpaid and said most team leaders spent about three weeks on each inspection. "If we want the right calibre of people ... then this is the right money. But we should be bringing the rest of the education system into the same wage bracket," she said. ■ Parents at the school attended by Mary-Claire Patten, nine-year-old daughter of the former Secretary of State for Education, John Patten, have voted against opting out of local authority control. A ballot at St Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic primary school in Westminster, London, revealed that 139 were against the move while just 55 were in favour.



Writing on the wall: A primary teacher uses chalk and blackboard in class as the educational pendulum swings back towards traditional methods

Goal is to rediscover 'balance' in primary teaching

Parents should be as concerned about choosing a primary school as they are over the choice of secondary. By the time children reach 11, the die has been largely cast. Educational underachievement and socio-economic factors have already taken their toll.

The national test results at 11 have shown that half our young people are performing below par in maths and English. Even when the problems over testing

are taken into account, there is still a major problem to be addressed.

Debate has raged since the Sixties around the most appropriate method for teaching at primary level. In 1967, the Plowden report set the stage for what was intended to be a balance in teaching between instruction and exploration. However, interpretations of the report seem

too far towards child-centred education. Small-group exploration was overused at the expense of whole-class instruction.

Since Plowden, primary teaching has too often neglected the importance of the direct transmission of information to children. Teachers' pedagogic skills have often been lost in an over-reliance on children's self-discovery and exploration.

The Government has failed to disseminate good practice or to act. The overloaded national curriculum caused particular problems for primary schools. Too much concentration on academic debates over the curriculum squeezed out the vital focus on teaching the basics. A decade later, ministers choose simply to abuse rather than to support schools constructively.

By the time the report of the so-called "Three Wise Men" was released in 1992, teacher training had focused too much on one approach, confusing many teachers and undermining their skills in translating knowledge into learning. Teachers had not been taught how to teach.

The Three Wise Men's report recommended a sensible balance in teaching. It suggested that teachers should choose teaching techniques "fit for their purpose" and not according to dogma or habit.

Teachers must be taught more about how to manage a class, including how to teach a whole class, as those in other countries are taught. Teaching the basics from the start must be the overriding goal. This is

why we must not simply have league tables of teacher training institutions but a plan of action for improvement as well.

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Blair's personal chaplain from Down Under

Tony Blair's Christian socialist mentor – and best mate – has returned to London. Ian Hargreaves tracked him down for this exclusive interview in today's New Statesman

Unlikely setting. Unlikely man. The place is London N7, a quarter-mile to the west of Holloway prison, the same distance north from Pentonville. Walk ten minutes and you're at Tony Blair's house in Islington. We're in a small flat which sits above the St Francis Church of England Centre, a bland 60s-ish brick structure which provides a meeting place for Alcoholics Anonymous, a disabled kids group and an Ethiopian church of Coptic Christians.

The man is Peter Thomson, 60, Australian, Anglican vicar. To the extent that he's famous, it is for having inspired the young Tony Blair at Oxford towards an idea of Christian socialism which continues to drive him. But those who know Thomson can tell you that he's famous for much else: he was booted out of one curacy in

It's not difficult to imagine him straying across the border to N1 to offer Tony a piece of his mind

Melbourne as a suspected communist, and out of a second, in Cambridge, for setting up a scrap-metal business to create jobs in his parish. He has been headmaster of one of Australia's top private schools, Timbertop, and worked in the family estate agency. He's a farmer and has read the TV news on Australia's Channel 7. Now, suddenly, he's here as Vicar of St Luke's Holloway, that is if the visa comes through OK.

So what is he doing in Holloway? "I was just waiting for something like this to come up," he says. "When Tony became leader, things started to happen. I was getting calls from London from people asking me about our relationship and it just became very exciting. I wanted to be part of it. It sparked me up. So I talked to Tony and said that if I came to England I would want to be what I am, not to work directly in the political arena."

A few weeks ago, Blair called to say that he heard St Luke's was looking for a vicar and would Peter like to be interviewed. He combined the trip with a visit to his publisher, about a planned book with the working title *Community*, and

"I want no role other than

Jail drug tests bring rise in heroin abuse

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

The Prison Service is investigating reports that prisoners are taking cocaine and heroin instead of cannabis in an attempt to beat drug tests.

The official inquiry follows claims from inmates, inspectors and guards, that the switch was taking place because traces of cannabis can remain in the bloodstream for up to a month, compared with a few days for the harder narcotics.

The latest claims about the trend towards harder drugs in jails are made today in a report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons.

The inspectorate visited Wayland Prison, a low-security category C jail in Norfolk, where they were told by inmates that heroin and crack cocaine use was increasing because of the mandatory tests.

Since March, all prisons in England and Wales have been testing for drugs. Ten per cent of the inmates are tested each

month. Anyone who tests positive, or refuses to take a test, is punished with loss of privileges and offered a place on a rehabilitation unit.

Wayland was one of the eight pilot prisons chosen for the introduction of mandatory drug-testing programme, which has gradually been introduced across the country since last July as part of a government anti-drugs initiative.

On average, 36 per cent of the inmates tested prove positive. About 90 per cent took cannabis and the remainder a mixture of heroin, cocaine, amphetamines and tranquilisers.

At Wayland, 36 per cent of the 523 prisoners tested were positive. Inmates told the inspectors that drugs remained in the urine for different periods: 30 days for chronic cannabis use and three days for opiates, such as heroin.

"Prisoners had told us that they were aware of these periods, and the use of opiates and crack was therefore increasing," the report states.

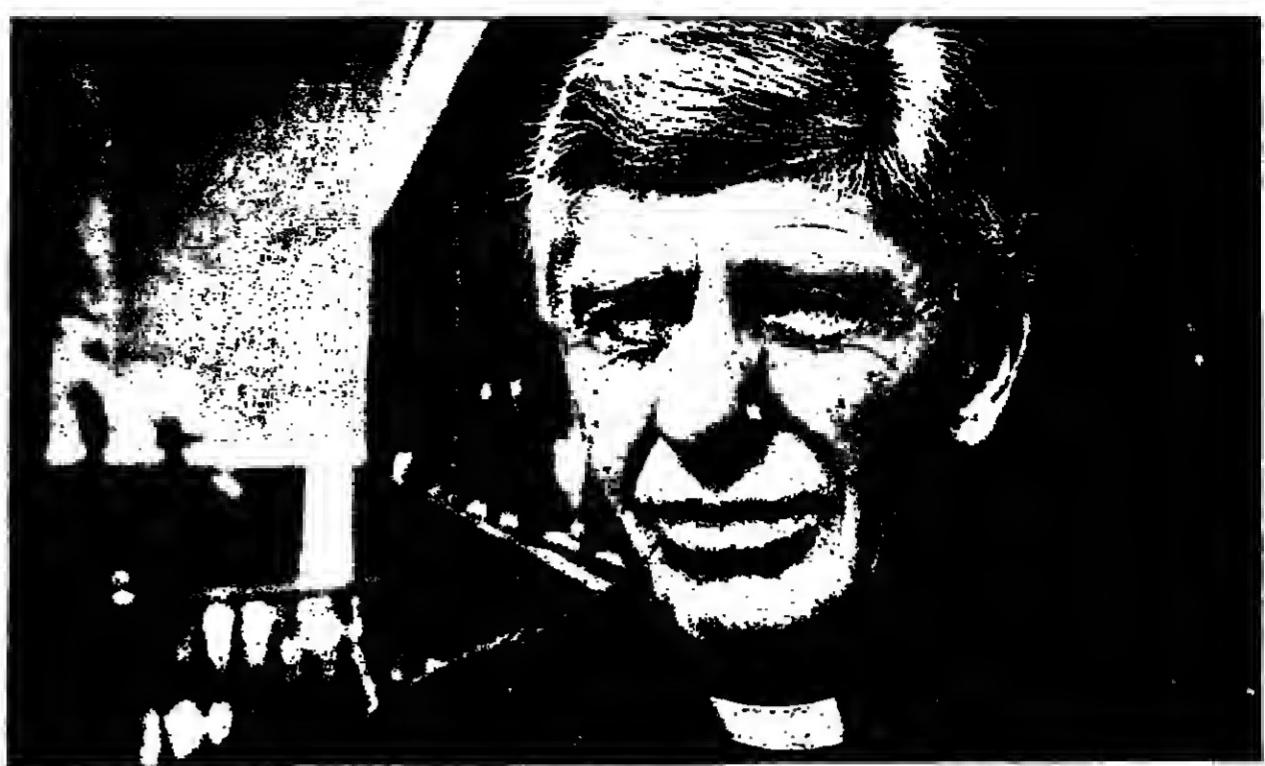
friendship," he says. "It's not entirely clear what that will mean. Partly, Thomson sees himself as the older friend of the Blair family needs as it heads towards Downing Street. It's not difficult to imagine him straying across the border to N1 to offer Tony a piece of his mind about the latest Shadow Cabinet battle. In a sense, he will be personal chaplain to the Blairs: that's if a chaplain can also be best mate, which in Thomson's case is not in any doubt.

But will the two men agree about ideas, as they once so resonantly did at Oxford? In Thomson's view New Labour has a coherent and vibrant philosophical underpinning. "It all starts with the word community. The idea of community represents the breakthrough of a philosophical position," he says. "It means the individual has no meaning except through relationships, so that it's in community that the maturing process goes on. You can pur-

sue the individualist line only so long as you've got other people to exploit. The third word is now close to the point where you can't push it any more, whether on environmental issues or whatever."

At the base of human relationships, Thomson says, is the family – again a familiar Blair preoccupation. But here, there is something different. "The family is not an issue of kin and blood. That's part of it, but I'm talking about families which exist because their members will it to be so, where people are bound together by a sense of belonging and love."

Three hours after I arrive, Thomson is still going at it hammer and tong: politics, ethics, family genetics, history, and, when the tape recorder is off, gossip of a passionate sort. Tony Blair might have ditched the Afghan coat, but he hasn't got rid of the hikie who keeps you up half the night binging your ear.



Peter Thomson: Famous for having inspired the young Tony Blair towards an idea of Christian socialism



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edited by David Lister

arts news

Guardians of the Tower dig for moat's treasures



Digging has reached Victorian levels - and clay pipes

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Arts Correspondent

For the first time in 700 years, the Tower of London's moat is being excavated to determine what treasures lie buried beneath its innocent grassy surface.

Every year 2.5 million visitors and tourists walk the drawbridge over the vast moat to enter the one of the world's most famous monuments. Few ponder on the waters which formerly lay beneath the walls.

Yet the moat was only filled in the mid-19th century, by order of the Duke of Wellington. By then it had dwindled to a brackish ditch, partly thanks to the slops and rubbish thrown in over the centuries.

The infill work was carried out with Victorian precision, but the engineers did not investigate for archaeological remains.

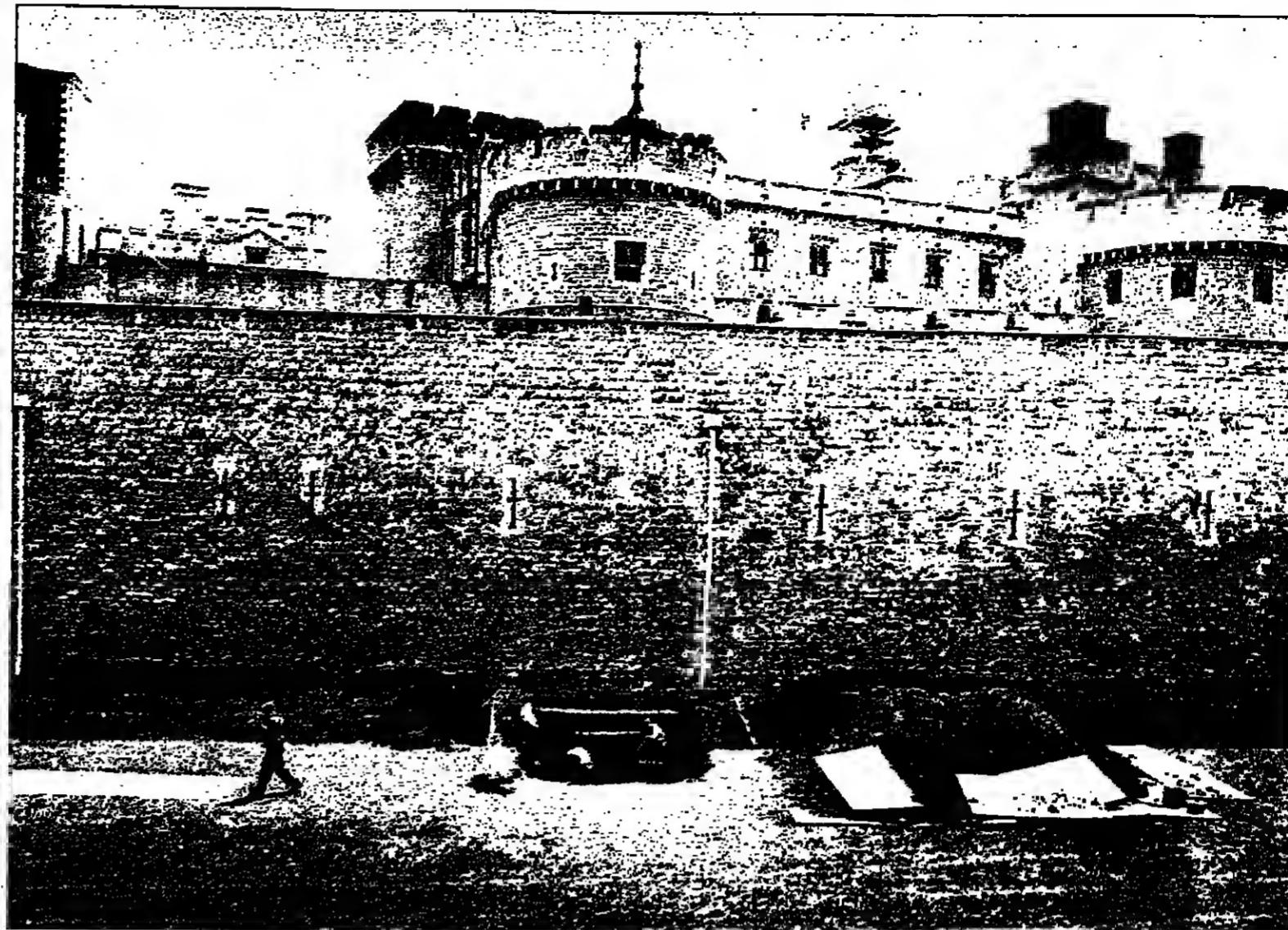
Last week experts began the first excavations since the Tow-

er was built in the 11th century, and the moat 200 years later. Initially, three evaluation trenches have been dug, but by the end of the summer 18 points in the moat will have been investigated using remote sensors.

The project is part of the Tower Environs Scheme, jointly run by the Historic Royal Palaces Agency, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the Port of London Authority and Taylor Woodrow property company.

Last September the scheme was awarded £500,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund after presenting a plan to improve the area surrounding the Tower and refill the moat. As a result of the excavations the Historic Royal Palaces, which runs the Tower, will know by the end of the summer whether reflooding is possible. If so, it is hoped the work can be finished by 2000.

An exciting spin-off of the project is that archeologists will



In search of history: Archaeologists yesterday at one of the first three trenches dug in the moat of the Tower of London. Photographs: John Voos

be able to unearth the moat's centuries-old treasure. Dr Simon Thurley, curator of the Historic Royal Palaces, said

yesterday that artefacts could in-

clude swords, rifles, even can-

nons, and jewellery.

"It's very uncertain what we

will find, although one should remember that until the late

18th century the moat would have been regularly sluiced and cleaned. So it is reasonably unlikely we'll find much medieval stuff. It's more likely to come

from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries," he said.

Dr Thurley added that while

a barge via Traitor's Gate for execution at the Tower, their journey would only have involved crossing six feet of water, across the moat.

Award for Take That writer

DAVID LISTER

Take That, hitherto the idols of the pubescent record buyers, came of age yesterday as their songwriter Gary Barlow was feted at the Ivor Novello Awards, the major international award for popular music composers.

The 25-year-old multi-millionaire singer-songwriter of the group, which split up earlier this year, won the Most Performed Work Award and Best Selling Song Title for his internationally successful hit "Back For Good".

Also victorious was Noel Gallagher from Oasis, who shared the Songwriter of the Year title with arch-rivals Blur at the Grosvenor Park Hotel, London. Gallagher and singer-songwriter Damon Albarn of Blur were not there to accept the awards from the lyricist Sir Tim Rice.

Also absent was the US-based singer Seal, who won the International Hit of the Year Award for "Kiss From a Rose".

Gallagher's snub amused Sir Tim, who said: "I am going to accept Noel's award and if he wants it he's bloody well going to have to come and get it."

However, many industry sources felt that Gallagher was right to resent the Ivor Novello Awards for involving an internationally respected award in the Blur/Oasis publicity battle.

Photo failures expose tensions at royal college

ANGELA PHILLIPS

There will be four blank spaces on the wall when the Royal College of Art opens its centenary exhibition next week - representing a quarter of the photography course who have failed to satisfy the examiners.

Students are up in arms about an unprecedented number of failures and re-sits on this year's Master of Arts in Photography. In a dispute that seems to have its roots in the battle between art and craft traditions they have called for the resignation of the head of department and called into question the position of the external assessor, Michael Collins, a former *Daily Telegraph* picture editor.

A student, who preferred not to be named, said: "The suitability of the external assessor was raised last year with the head of department. He is a picture editor. We didn't believe that he would be able to judge fine art."

The College Provost, Lord Snowdon, responded diplomatically, saying: "All exams are open to pass and failure. You can't have exams if you have a rule that nobody fails. I speak as someone who failed my architecture exams."

Two years ago, the department moved out from under the wing of advertising photographer John Hedgecoe into the choppy waters of the fine art department. Conceptual artist/photographer Peter Kennard was appointed senior lecturer.

Students were told: "Our admissions procedure is such that you were chosen as one of a team of photographers spanning a broad spectrum of ideas, interests and approaches - from reporters through to visionaries." Now some at the more visionary end of the spectrum are being told that their two years of hard work and financial sacrifice have been wasted.

Zelda Cheatele, of the Zelda

Cheatle Gallery, which specialises in fine art photography, was invited by the college to give personal tutorials to all the students after their assessment.

She was shocked at the marks which were apparently revised upwards during the examiners' meeting to prevent even more failures. "You do not fail students at the final hour, of the final assessments, after two years of diligent hard work," she said.

Yet Michael Collins had actively supported and encouraged students at their pre-assessment. Personally, I would have passed all of them."

Mr Collins declined to comment on individual staff members but seems to have changed his mind about the course itself. He said: "All of the students have suffered because the course, and the faculty, are sub-standard. Traditionally the photography course rubber stamps MAs which is disrespectful to individual students and perpetuates an inadequate MA course."

Ms Cheatele disagrees: "What is good about the RCA course is the freedom and flexibility students have to create and every single year excellent students come out. Peter Kennard had done an amazingly good job in the short time he has been there, his influence is just beginning to filter through. The new group, which he has recruited, are an amazing bunch. The passion and enthusiasm he brings to the course is magnificent."

Mr Collins insists that the decision to fail and refer students was arrived at collectively, but, the head of department, Michael Langford, who took over from Mr Hedgecoe two years ago, made it clear that he was "shocked and upset" by the unusual number of failures. Mr Kennard would say only: "I fully support my students."

Mr Langford could very easily be seen as a part of the old school of craft photographers. He is the author of a number

The students are awaiting the result of the appeal against their marks.

DAILY POEM

'Madam'

By Christopher Logue

Madam
I have sold you
an electric plug
an electric torch
an electric blanket
an electric bell
an electric cooker
an electric kettle
an electric fan
an electric iron
an electric drier
an electric mixer
an electric washer
an electric knife
an electric clock
an electric fire

an electric toothbrush
an electric razor
an electric teapot
an electric eye
and electric light.
Allow me to sell you
an electric chair.

The publication in May of Christopher Logue's *Selected Poems* (Faber, £7.99) mark the culmination of a long and disparate career as soldier, political activist, actor and screenplay writer, librettist and poem poster original. There is a fantastic, bawdy, sea-shanty strain that runs through Logue's work, an absence of curnudgeon and such a barefaced honesty that he is impossible to resist. One of Faber's triumphs, and if you purchase one poetry book this summer, this should be it.

This weekend, you can get 10% off all home security products. For instance the A1 wired alarm system (AJ 600N) and the A1 wireless alarm system (RF 8200) are on offer for an unbeatable £62.99* and £148.49* respectively. So come down to Do It All today. There has never been a better time to give your home some extra protection.



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international

Czech polls: Vaclav Klaus, a pragmatic right winger, is keeping his country on the free market path

Thatcher's man in Prague set for second term

ADRIAN BRIDGE
Prague

"What is the difference between God and Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus?" runs an old joke in Prague. "God does not believe he is Klaus."

Mr Klaus no doubt smiles whenever he hears it. Not a man given to belittling his own achievements, he likes to take much of the credit for what has undoubtedly been the great success story of the economic transition in the Czech Republic over the past six years.

Only slightly longer in check, he saw fit last year to publish his own version of "The Ten Commandments" - the dos and don'ts of how to go about replacing clapped-out command economies with the free market.

He is now poised to do something even more miraculous: to halt the regional trend towards the return of former communists by becoming the first right-

wing politician from the former east European bloc to win a second term of office.

According to opinion polls, Mr Klaus's Civic Democratic Party (ODS) is set to re-emerge as the largest party in the country's two-day general election beginning today. With the help of two similarly right-of-centre coalition partners, he should then be in a position to form the next government.

To a Czech variation of the theme, posters advertising the ODS cause depict 20, 50 and 100 crown notes being withdrawn from a wallet: testimony to the country's newly generated wealth and the strength of its now fully convertible currency.

"We've never had it so good," runs the campaign slogan. And with economic growth set to reach 5 per cent this year, inflation down to 8 per cent and unemployment still below 3 per cent, many Czechs agree.

"Mr Klaus may describe himself as a Thatcherite but in reality he is a pragmatist," said Jiri Pehe, research director at Prague's Open Media Research Institute. "He has shown that he can suspend the economic reform process if he sees it is threatening political stability. Hence the absence here of a strong left-wing backlash."

Flying in the face of his own professed beliefs, Mr Klaus, an economist during the communist era, has kept unprofitable factories open, maintained rent controls and kept energy prices low. He has also caved in to wage demands from public sector workers.

With the Prime Minister championing capitalism with a human face, the opposition Social Democrats (CSSD), have struggled to latch on to a cause - particularly as they do not disagree with the fundamental direction the country is taking.

Much of their campaign has centred on calls to stamp out the corruption they say is prevalent among the current ruling elite. But while they would undoubtedly seek more emphasis on social policies, they would not reverse reforms or go back on the twin goals of Nato and European Union membership.

Apart from the right-wing, anti-gypsy Republican Party, the only real opposition to Mr Klaus comes from the communists, party that clings tenaciously to much of its old ideology. But although polls show the communists can expect just over 11 per cent of the vote, most Czechs recoil with horror at the thought of the party.

"Unlike elsewhere in the region, there is no nostalgia for the communist regime here," said Mr Pehe. "In Hungary and Poland, the last years of communism saw real reforms. Here, we had 1968 and then 20 years of darkness. Even if the communists here said they had reformed, Czechs would not trust them."



Crossing the divide: Advertising hoardings for the Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus in a Prague street

Photograph: Petr Josek/Reuters

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

India's elections ended yesterday when Kashmiris voted in Srinagar. Security forces fired tear gas and warning shots to break up demonstrations by Kashmiri Muslim militants who had urged a boycott of the polls. Officials said voter turnout was 37 per cent, but eyewitnesses contacted by the Independent in Srinagar claimed that in some neighbourhoods of the city, security forces used coercion to drive Kashmiris to the polling booths. Several Indian journalists said they were beaten with rifle butts by members of the Border Security Force while trying to stop an officer from dragging a woman out of her home.

Muslim separatists exploded six rockets and grenades around the troubled city to scare away voters. Caught between the intimidation of Indian security forces on one side and the threats of Muslim separatists on the other, many Kashmiris who went to the polls claimed they deliberately spoiled their ballots by voting for all candidates. Tim McGirk - New Delhi

The bodies of seven French monks killed by their kidnappers have been found in Algeria near the town where they were held, France's Foreign Ministry said. The Armed Islamic Group, known as the GIA, said last week it had beheaded the seven monks it kidnapped from their isolated monastery two months earlier because France had refused to free jailed Algerian militants. More than 40,000 people have been killed in Algeria's civil war. AP - Paris

Three US Air Force commanders in Europe were relieved of duty as a result of an investigation of the jetliner crash in Croatia last month that killed the Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and 34 others. The Air Force announced that Major General Charles Hellebore, commander of the 17th Air Force, has lost his confidence in the ability of the men to "effectively discharge their responsibilities". The three are the top three officers of the 86th Airlift Wing, based at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. AP - Washington

Burma's military rulers stepped up denunciations of foreign interference in the country and continued verbal and written attacks on the democracy movement led by Aung San Suu Kyi. The government ran slogans in newspapers and as scrolling headlines on television, including "Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the state", "Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy" and "Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views".

A commentary carried in all official newspapers renewed a ban on the Voice of America and BBC, both of which broadcast daily Burmese-language news programmes. Reuter - Rangoon

A German court said it had rejected the claim of a cat owner who wanted the state to pay for the care of his pets while he was away at a health spa. Germans can claim back many expenses if their stay at a spa is prescribed by a doctor, but the government is trying to slash welfare spending by cutting down on such stays and obliging workers to take health cures in holiday time. Reuter - Berlin

The conviction of Heidi Fleiss, the "Hollywood Madam", for pandering has been overturned by a state appeals court which ruled that jurors engaged in vote-swapping misconduct to avoid a deadlock. "The jurors involved in this misconduct committed a transgression worse than those with which Fleiss was charged," Justice Reuben Ortega wrote for the three-judge panel. "Those jurors turned this serious proceeding into a farce." Ms Fleiss, 30, faced a three-year prison term over the pandering charges. AP - Hollywood

A Buddhist monk who murdered a British tourist, Joanne Maschler, from Cheshire, in December while she was visiting a temple, will have his death sentence commuted to life in prison as part of a mass royal reprieve for 70,000 convicts. The decree demonstrating royal mercy will be handed down on 9 June by King Bhumibol Adulyadej as part of massive ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of his accession to the throne of Thailand. AP - Bangkok

In a dig at the Communists, Boris Yeltsin's supporters in south-eastern Siberia are offering 1 million rubles (£130) for the person with the most Soviet-era ration coupons. Campaign organisers in Ulan Ude, capital of the Buryat republic, 2,500 miles south-east of Moscow, say they want to remind voters about how they lived when the Communists were in power. One of Mr Yeltsin's main campaign tactics is to frighten the electorate into voting for him as the best defence against the return of the Communists. AP - Ulan Ude

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The elections which gave the Democratic Party victory have been condemned by observers, writes Andrew Gumbel

Europe turns a blind eye to Albanian poll

Tirana

European governments have decided to turn a blind eye to reports of systematic vote-rigging in Albania's general election and in effect endorse the overwhelming but almost certainly fraudulent victory claimed by President Sali Berisha and his Democratic Party.

The elections were boycotted by all but one opposition party and roundly condemned by international observers, the foreign media and human rights groups. The chairman of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti, yesterday spoke of "serious irregularities" and called for at least part of the election to be repeated.

But EU diplomats contacted in Tirana made clear that their countries would accept the election results with little more than a flicker of reluctance, preferring to safeguard their economic and strategic interests in Albania rather than speak out against abuses of human rights and due democratic process.

"Things are on course to

continue. The second round of the election will take place on Sunday and the new parliament will assemble," one senior European diplomat said. "I don't think it would be helpful to do anything over-hasty. The Albanian people would not be served if we bring them turmoil, as we surely would if we criticise this election."

The diplomat sidestepped the criticisms aired by election observers, saying European governments would not react to the evidence of fraud until the OSCE published its final report in two weeks' time.

Many European countries, notably Italy and Germany, but Britain too, have been uncritical admirers of Mr Berisha for the past four years despite clear signs of growing authoritarianism. In recent months it has become an ever more unholy alliance - Mr Berisha providing stability in his corner of the Balkans and slowly opening up foreign investment opportunities, and in return Europe doing nothing to stop him seizing control of the judiciary and cracking down on the opposition and the press.

Such indulgence has not been shared by the United States, which started out as an active Berisha fan but has gradually become more ambivalent. Yesterday, according to diplomats, Washington was considering whether to pull the plug on some of its aid and co-operation projects in Albania. A decision is expected next week.

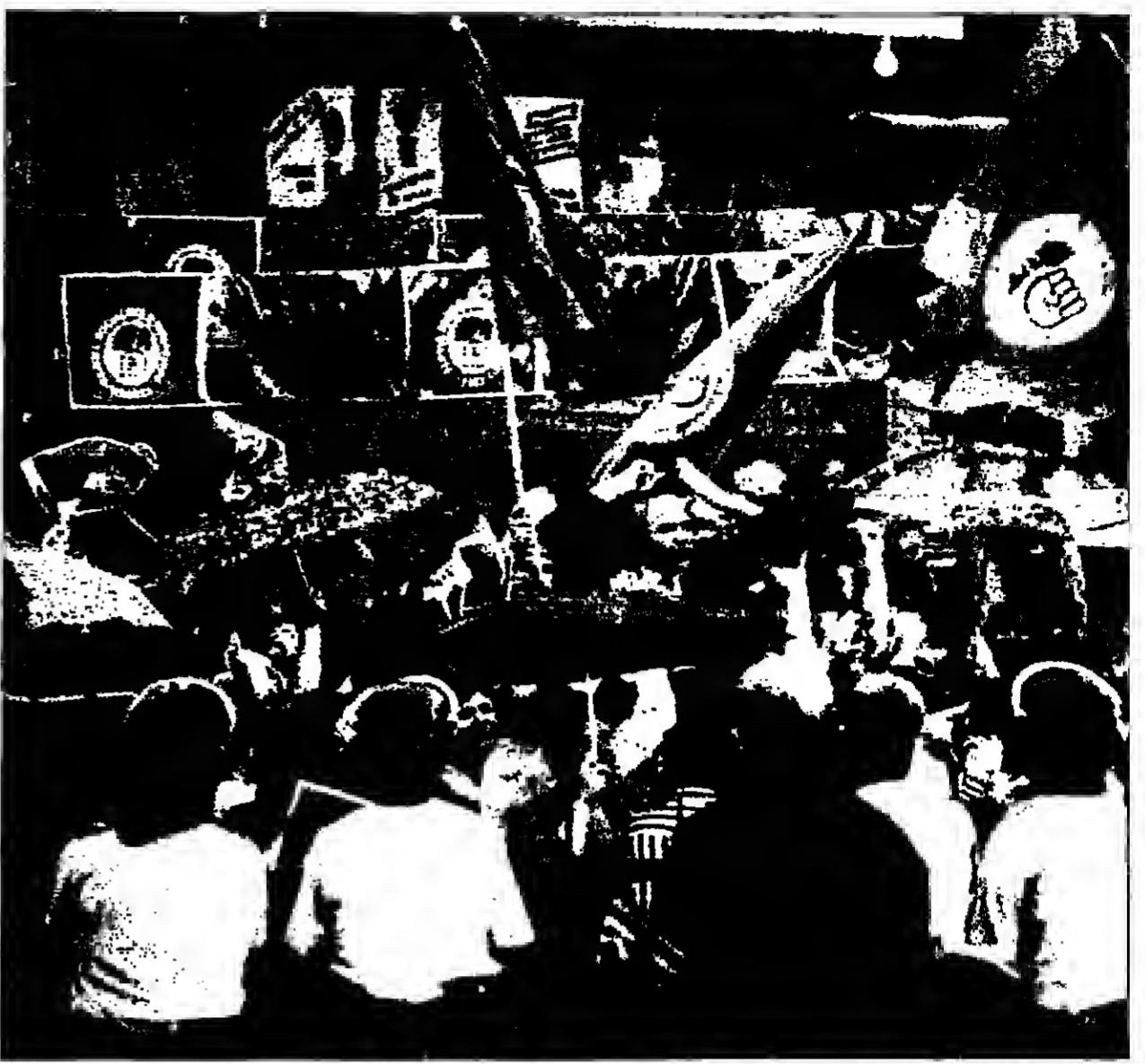
According to opposition leaders and some foreign observers, it was Europe's support that emboldened Mr Berisha into thinking he could get away with rigging the election. When the polling clearly went awry, and especially after police brutally broke up a peaceful opposition rally on Tuesday, European governments became acutely embarrassed and hinted that they might at last take some concrete action.

But that embarrassment appears to have faded with remarkable speed, helped by a presidential statement on Wednesday night promising to launch a full investigation into Tuesday's rally and ordering a re-run of the election in three constituencies where the manipulation was most blatant - scarcely enough to right the wrongs committed, but a gesture to save faces all round.

An EU ambassador yesterday described the opposition as "irresponsible" for protesting against the election publicly and suggested everyone "take a deep breath and calm down". Britain's chief interests are in oil exploration, financial services and construction, "all reasons to be pro-Berisha", according to one non-EU diplomatic source.

The failure of the international community to stand by democratic principles is having its effect on the ground. Albanians terrified by the presence of thugs with guns on the streets have not dared stage public protests of any great size, although there have been some clashes with police in opposition strongholds in the south.

Moreover, there are signs that Mr Berisha is planning to offer the opposition some extra seats in parliament, and that the opposition might accept. So far, 95 of the 140 seats have gone to the Democratic Party, five to the main opposition party, the Socialists, and two to the ethnic Greeks, with 38 to be announced.



Riot police watch demonstrators in Skanderberg Square, Tirana, who were demanding that this week's Albanian elections be re-run. The police later beat and injured several of the protesters

Photograph: AP

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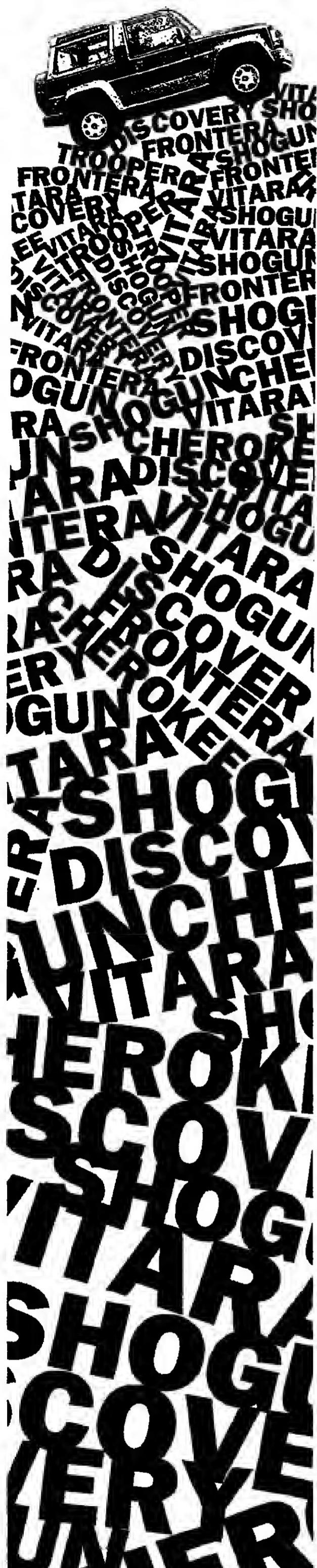
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The Daihatsu Fourtrak.
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Island tribe fights to stay alone

Tim McGirk on the Jarawa, whose isolated life in the forests of the Andaman Islands is threatened by the timber industry

New Delhi — An Indian anthropologist was recently approached by some woodcutters in the Andaman Islands who make amulets from the bones of tiger and deer for witchcraft. This time, they asked the anthropologist for a human bone.

Not any human bone would do. The woodsmen wanted a Jarawa bone. Smearred with mud and armed with bows and arrows, the Jarawa are fierce and almost invisible Stone Age tribesmen who stalk the Andaman rain forests. "The woodsmen think the Jarawa are powerful and strong people, and they wanted to use their bones for rituals," said Triloki Pandit, a retired director at the Anthropological Survey of India who has stripped himself naked — even removing his thick spectacles — and gone into the jungle to befriend the Jarawa.

These days, it is more likely that a Jarawa would end up with a trophy bone or two taken from a woodcutter, if the Jarawa so desired. (But they don't.) The only bones the Jarawa save are their ancestors' lower mandibles. Strung together, while making a fetching necklace.)

Loggers who went into the Jarawa's leafy domain recently with armed forest wardens strayed into an ambush. Suddenly they found themselves under attack by a war party of 100 Jarawa sling arrows. Camouflaged, the Jarawa were practically invisible in the dense foliage. Forest wardens tried to drive them off with gunfire, but the rebels were undeterred. Two loggers were killed, pierced by arrows, and three wardens captured. Grabbing the same axes that the loggers had in-

tended to use to fell the Jarawas' trees, the tribesmen then hacked off their captives' hands before vanishing into the jungle.

"The Jarawa are like cobras," explained Mr Pandit. "They'll only attack when threatened. It's not in their ethos to destroy. The Jarawa will only kill habitual intruders."

Samir Acharya of the Society for Andaman and Nicobar Ecology in Port Blair recalled an incident in which the Jarawa tracked an enemy to his village. "This was a notorious fellow who had gone and burnt down some Jarawa huts. The Jarawa went to his village, dragged him out and killed him. They could easily have murdered everyone in the village, but they didn't. They only wanted the man who'd done them harm," he said.

For more than 1,000 years, sea voyagers have given this island chain in the Bay of Bengal a wide berth because the Jarawa and the other Andaman tribesmen were thought to be cannibals. A ninth-century Muslim poet of the Andamanese: "Their feet are a cubit in length and they delighted in human flesh which they tore up almost like wild beasts and, ignorant of even the simplest form of cookery, devoured raw."

A later British traveller, embroiling on past sea legends, gave a sigh of relief that the Andamanese were "too stupid" to build boats. "Otherwise, the natives might have lain in wait ... like the most ferocious beasts

of prey, to supply themselves with stores of human flesh for the horrid banquet of blood in which it was their delight to indulge."

The British were the first outsiders to settle the Andaman Islands, arriving in the mid 19th century. They turned it into a penal colony for Indian mutineers, since its sharks and feared cannibals were the perfect deterrent for escaping convicts. Over the years, three of



Team work: The Jarawa's sense of social duty is so deep that anyone who violates it must leave. Photograph: Tim Pandit

though the Indian government has theoretically given the Jarawa 50 square miles of jungle on the South and Middle Andaman islands, ecologist Mr Acharya said loggers are destroying the Jarawa forests.

"There is very large and permanent encroachment going on," he said.

Some hardwoods found in the Andaman forests are rare and exquisite; they adorn Buckingham Palace. Although authorities put a limit of 100,000 cubic metres on timber that can be cut from the islands, nearly twice that amount is being logged, often illegally. The authorities also gouged a road through the Jarawa forest, which some officials later admitted was "a cardinal folly", Mr Acharya said. "Instead of undoing their mistake, the authorities are enlarging the road and repairing it."

Only a few hundred Jarawa are left, and the tribe is dwindling. "These woodsmen, they must be killing the Jarawa sometimes in revenge, but we never hear of it," said Mr Pandit. A Jarawa boy was recently caught in a saw-toothed steel trap hidden by poachers and his foot was crushed. Authorities are debating whether to set the crippled tribal youth free again in the rain forest.

"We know so little about the Jarawa. They laugh, they cry easily. They love their children. They share everything. But we don't even know what gods they worship or what they call themselves," Mr Pandit said. "And the Jarawa know so little about us. They don't know that any mistake we make in protecting them could lead to their destruction."

the Andaman tribes have become subdued, but the Jarawa and the Sentinelese have violently resisted attempts to colonise them.

Even though the Jarawa have not learned how to make fire (each family keeps their own coals smouldering in a hollow tree, safe from the tropical rains), they are not, as Mr Pandit says, "under the spell of our superior culture". He added, "They're not over-awed by our

Zyuganov unveils his economic cure

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

While much of Russia is still dazed by the gall of Boris Yeltsin's pre-election attempt to resolve the Chechen crisis, economists have turned to another highly touchy issue: what would happen to Russia's economy if the Communists took control of the Kremlin?

This week their economic plan was published, to be overshadowed by the Chechen ceasefire and then by Mr Yeltsin's trip to the republic while the rebel leader, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev was, in effect, held hostage in Moscow.

But now the excitement has begun to fade and the economic strategy of Gennady Zyuganov and his Communist-led National-Patriotic bloc is under fire from those who fear it will destroy the patchy achievements of Mr Yeltsin's economic reforms, notably a stable rouble and falling inflation (1.6 per cent for May, according to government figures). The stock market may be booming but warnings abound of capital flight and plummeting foreign investment.

The plan, "From destruction to creation, Russia's path into the 21st century", describes a three-stage strategy to revive the "catastrophic" economy, creating growth and increased social spending. It contains few of the red rage to the bullish reformers that some predicted. It talks of the need to reform the state and control strategic industries.

By the close of stage three of the plan in 2010 (echoes of Stalin's five-year plans), Russia

would have turned to "post-industrial technologies".

The authors of the document attribute their approach to diverse sources, including Keynes, Roosevelt's New Deal and Marx. There would be a "new role of the state in economic management", said Tatjana Koryagina, a former Soviet economist who worked on Gosplan, the USSR's notorious central planning committee.

The Communist bloc is hopeful, though, to the Interna-

tional Monetary Fund, which this year loaned Russia \$10.2bn over three years, on condition it met strict economic conditions. Ms Koryagina has accused the IMF of "deliberately ruining the economy", while Russia would pay its debts, it had no intention of depending further on foreign loans.

Roland Nash, an economist with the Russia-Europe Centre for Economic Policy, said the plan was "totally unrealistic ... where are they going to get the money from?"

Andrei Illarionov, director of the Institute for Economic Analysis in Moscow, said: "It is as if the writers in the second half of the programme forgot what was written in the first half." The Communists' growth projections (8 to 9 per cent by 1998) would require double-digit investment and production rises over the next two years to come true.

However, he acknowledged similarities between Mr Yeltsin, who has moved increasingly towards Communist territory recently, and Mr Zyuganov. Both want increased funding for industry; both see a bigger role for government.

Nor is Mr Yeltsin in a position to complain about excessive social spending. Tax collection has plunged as the election approaches, yet he has been throwing money around on his campaign tour, making gifts of new libraries, health centres and holidays during his walkabouts.

Exactly how much more common ground is shared by the two opponents will soon become clearer: the President is expected to release his election manifesto today.

UN tribunal begins Rwanda genocide trial

DAVID ORR
Nairobi

The first people to be charged with involvement in the 1994 Rwandan genocide appeared before an international tribunal in the north Tanzanian town of Arusha yesterday. Two years after allegedly playing leading roles in the killing of up to 1 mil-

lion minority Tutsis and moderate Hutus, two men sat before a judge and jury as charges against them were read out. A third is to appear in court today. All three were extradited from Zambia.

Georges Rutaganda, 37, an agricultural engineer and businessman in central Rwanda at the time of the genocide, pleaded not guilty to eight counts of genocide and crimes against humanity. His indictment says he helped to kill a large number of Tutsis while men under his control also butchered members of Rwanda's ethnic minority.

A shareholder in a radio station which helped fuel the genocide, Mr Rutaganda was also a leading light in the Interahamwe (Those who fight together) militia that was at the forefront of the genocide.

His trial was adjourned to October after his Belgian lawyer said he had to visit Rwanda to

gather more evidence. Jean Paul Akayesu, who was chief authority in a district where at least 2,000 Tutsis were murdered, has also pleaded not guilty to the charges against him.

The indictment against him says he not only failed to speak out against the bloodshed but ordered and participated in many killings.

The United Nations International Tribunal for Rwanda has been criticised, particularly by the Rwandan government, for being too slow. It has suffered from a lack of funding, a shortage of criminal investigators and poor co-operation from countries where suspects have sought refuge.

It has indicted only 10 suspects, mainly middle-ranking former officials. More than 70,000 Hutus accused of involvement in the 1994 genocide are languishing in overcrowded jails in Rwanda.

C&G Mortgage Rate Change Notice to borrowers

Under the terms of our Mortgage Price Promise, C&G mortgage rates are being reduced from 1 June 1996 by 0.20% per annum.

The reduction applies to all C&G variable base rates except base rates 191 - 196 inclusive which, as they already benefit from lower rates, will be reduced by 0.05%.

Details have been sent to customers who require written notice under the terms of their mortgage.

This rate change does not apply to mortgages with a fixed or capped interest rate.

Under the terms of our Price Promise, we will review our mortgage rates again on 15 June 1996.

C&G

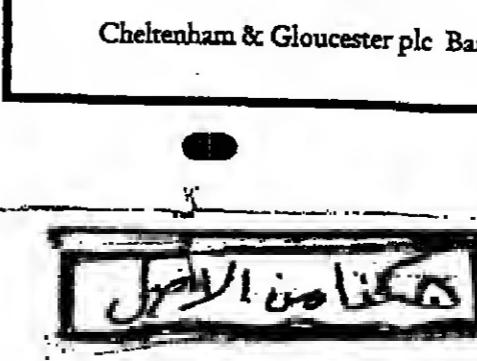
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Miracle man: Mr Zyuganov at a rally. It is estimated that, for his growth scheme to work, double-digit investment and production rises would be required over the next two years



THE INDEPENDENT



PLAY FORMULA 1 DREAM TEAM



GRAND PRIX '96 RACE SCHEDULE

Spanish GP
June 2

Canadian GP
June 16

French GP
June 30

British GP
July 14

German GP
July 28

Hungarian GP
August 11

Belgian GP
August 25

Italian GP
September 8

Portuguese GP
September 22

Japanese GP
October 13

WIN a drive in a Grand Prix car

Plus prizes to be won with every grand prix

Formula 1 Dream Team is just like Fantasy Football: you pick and manage your dream grand prix team to score points over the coming season.

Even though the grand prix season has started, it is not too late to join in: pit your wits against other enthusiasts and you could win our overall 1996 champion's prize, a drive in a Formula One car plus additional prizes for each race.

Your team must comprise three drivers, a chassis and an engine; your budget is £40 million. Make your selections from the grand prix shopping list printed below; the only restriction is that your third driver must come from the £1 million category. Details of how to enter are given on this page. You can enter a team at any point during the grand prix season but the earlier you enter, the greater your chances of being our overall champion. Remember, there are prizes for the winning Dream Team in each individual grand prix so you can enter a different team for each race.

HOW YOU SCORE

Points are awarded per race to the top six finishers, based on the Formula One World Championship points scoring system (10, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1) but with an extra 10 points awarded to each of the top six finishers. All drivers are eligible to score for a

top six finish but can also notch up extra points as follows:

- The fastest driver in race-day warm-up will collect six points, with five for the second and so on down to one point for the sixth quickest.
- Drivers score one point for each place they make up over their grid position. Points are not deducted for losing places.
- Five points are lost if your driver posts first retirement, four for second down to one point lost for the fifth retirement.
- If your driver makes the quickest pit-stop (from the entry of the pitlane to the exit) you gain five points.
- If your driver sets the fastest lap time in the race, you gain five points.
- If your driver receives a stop/go penalty, you lose five points.
- If your driver starts on pole position, you gain five points.
- The Independent will name a Driver of the Day after each race for a particularly impressive performance, worth five points.

● Non-qualification for a grand prix loses you two points. If a driver is on the FIA's published starting grid but fails to take the start, no points are lost.

● Drivers removed from the results for any reason lose all points gained that weekend. Any driver not competing in a grand prix weekend scores no points.

● Chassis score and lose points in the same way as drivers for a top six finish or any early retirement.

The score is based on the first chassis home of that particular manufacturer. Likewise, only the first chassis retirement will count if they are both among the first five to retire.

● Engine rules are the same as the chassis rules, without the retirement penalties.



HOW TO ENTER

Choose your Dream Team from the shopping list on this page. Remember, you must choose three drivers (the third from the £1 million section), one chassis and one engine. You must not exceed your budget of £40 million.

Give your team a name and register it by ringing 0891 891 806.

You will immediately be asked the entry question: How many races are there in this year's Formula One World Championship?

To enter your Dream Team details you can use one of two methods.

Method 1 uses a tone phone that lets you key in the code numbers of your driver, chassis and engine choices. The computer will check that your team falls within budget and is eligible.

Method 2 uses a non-tone phone and you give your details verbally. A budget check is not possible using this method.

When you have registered your Dream Team, you will be asked to predict the number of points this year's champion will notch up over the year.

In case of a tie at the end of the season, the nearest figure to the champion's points will win the top prize. In the event of a further tie, the team that registered first will win.

Once you have registered your team you will be asked for your name, address and telephone number. Your team selection plus your personal details will be played back to you and, when you confirm that they are correct, you will be given a PIN number.

This is confirmation of your entry and will enable you to access the score checking line.

There is no limit on the number of teams an individual can enter, but only one team can be registered per call.

CHECKING YOUR SCORE

You can check your team's position at any time by calling 0891 891 806 and quoting your PIN number. If you want to know the individual driver, chassis and engine scores from the most recent race, call 0891 891 807. This line will also list the Top 50 Formula One Dream Teams.

Rules

1. All telephone calls are charged at 39p per minute cheap rate, 49p per minute at all other times, with a typical call to secure your entry lasting between five and seven minutes.

2. The deadline to be included in a particular race is midday the Friday prior to that race.

3. The judge's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into and there is no cash alternative for prizes.

4. Employees of Newspaper Publishing Plc, Haymarket Publishing Ltd and all associated companies and their families are ineligible.

5. Entrants must be 18 or over and residents of the UK or the Irish Republic.

6. To be eligible for the main prize, you must hold a current driving licence, be no more than 1.95m tall and weigh no more than 220lbs.

7. All scores will be worked out according to the official FIA time sheets produced at the meeting. The values stated for drivers, engines and chassis bear no relation to real life.

8. In the event of a tie for the Dream Team Top Prize or for any of the individual race prizes, the team that registered first will win.

9. For lost PIN numbers, call 0891 891 808. Helpline: 01275 344183.

10. The Top 50 Teams Line, lists the top 50 teams from the last race. Both the Team Position Check Line and the Results & Top 50 Teams Line will be updated at 2pm on the Monday following a race.

Make your selection from the Grand Prix Shopping List

DRIVERS

	£6m	£1m	CHASSIS	£3m	£1m	ENGINE
£25m	13 M Saab	28 M Blundell*	£20m	49 Minardi	£12m	54 Peugeot
1 M Schumacher	14 P Larby	29 J-C Boullion*	40 Benetton	55 Mugen	£10m	51 Renault
£23m	24m	30 K Brack*	41 Williams	56 Ferrari	£8m	52 Ferrai
2 J Alesi	45 P Diniz	31 K Butt*	42 McLaren	57 Yamaha	£5m	53 Mercedes
3 D Hill	16 U Katayama	32 E Collard*	43 McLaren	58 Hart	£3m	56 Ford
£20m	17 J Verstappen	33 N Fortuna*	44 Sauber	59 Ford ED	£2m	57 Yamaha
4 G Berger	18 O Panis	34 D Franchitti*	45 Jordan	60 Arrows	£1m	58 Honda
£18m	25m	35 N Lanigan*	46 Ligier	61 Williams	£800k	59 Ford V8
5 D Coulthard	19 L Badoer	36 J Magnussen*	47 Tyrrell	62 Benetton	£600k	60 Ford ED V8
6 E Irvine	20 R Rosset	37 A Prost*	48 Sauber	63 McLaren	£400k	61 Williams
7 J Villeneuve	21 A Montermini	38 G Tarquini*	49 Jordan	64 McLaren	£300k	62 Benetton
£13m	22 G Fisichella	39 K Wendlinger*	50 Ligier	65 Williams	£200k	63 Williams
8 M Hakkinen	23 V Sospic*	40 M Brundle*	51 Arrows	66 Williams	£150k	64 Williams
9 H H Frentzen	24 T Marques*	41 M Blundell*	52 Arrows	67 Williams	£100k	65 Williams
£10m	10 M Brundle	42 G Agnelo*	53 Arrows	68 Williams	£80k	66 Williams
11 R Barrichello	25 F Lagorce	43 H Noda*	54 Arrows	69 Williams	£60k	67 Williams
12 J Herbert	26 H Noda*	44 T Horner*	55 Arrows	70 Williams	£40k	68 Williams

*Not competing in the Spanish GP, but may compete later.

CHASSIS

£3m
£1m

50 Forti

THE SPANISH GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT

51 Forti

52 Ferrai

53 Mercedes

54 Peugeot

55 Mugen

56 Ford

57 Yamaha

58 Hart

59 Ford

60 Ford ED

61 Williams

62 Benetton

63 McLaren

64 McLaren

65 Williams

66 Williams

67 Williams

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Knife-edge vote leaves the world

Netanyahu on course to lead right to power

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

The turning point came at 2am. The early exit polls showed a lead for the Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, of a shade more than 1 per cent over Binyamin "Bibi" Netanyahu, the right-wing Likud leader. In the Labour headquarters in Tel Aviv young members of the party waved their hands and chanted: "Hoo-ha, what happened. Bibi's blown it!"

In their headquarters depressed Likud supporters also believed "Bibi had blown it". One observer reported: "There is no clapping, a few of the young people at the back tried to shout 'Bibi, Bibi', but the politicians are standing at the



Peres: Called election too late

front with impassive faces. I can see a woman crying."

In the next few hours a number of Likud politicians may have permanently damaged their careers by premature criticism of Mr Netanyahu. "Do you think he should go home?" one Likud member of the Knesset was asked. "That's for him to decide," replied the politician. At the same moment some of Israel's better-known columnists were writing Mr Netanyahu's obituary.

Then Israeli television channel one announced a new

forecast poll, saying that Mr Peres and Mr Netanyahu were running neck and neck at 50 per cent each. It said a transfer of power was quite possible. The pollsters blamed the ultra-Orthodox for misleading their pollsters. In the neighbourhood from which Yigal Amir, the assassin of Yitzhak Rabin, comes, there was a blanket refusal to take part in exit polls.

Israel gradually began to realise Mr Netanyahu might have won after all. Out of 3.9 million votes he has a lead of only 20,000 and the postal votes of 154,000 soldiers, hospital patients, seamen, prisoners and diplomats have still not been counted.

Soldiers are much the biggest group and they have traditionally voted for the right. Leah Rabin, the widow of the murdered prime minister, said: "I am looking at where I keep my suitcases and I feel like packing my bags and flying away from here as quickly as possible. In my opinion, if a mistake was made, it was that not enough use was made of the terrible murder."

Many Labour supporters will agree. Mr Peres did not call an election after the murder, or use the wave of revulsion against the right. He seemed determined to win an election on his own merits. With the polls in his favour, he called an election six months early, but then saw his popularity plummet as four suicide bombers killed 59 people in Jerusalem, Ashkelon and Tel Aviv. In the final television debate last Sunday, which may have determined the outcome, Mr Netanyahu asked why Israelis "were afraid of letting their children ride on a bus".

What will Mr Netanyahu do now? He will have little difficulty forming a government. Although Likud lost seats it has potential allies in the newly emergent Russian immigrant party of Natan Sharansky and the religious parties, which had a triumphant night. The Arab parties did well, but the most im-



Facing defeat: A downcast Labour supporter with a poster of Mr Peres being consoled at party headquarters after hearing Netanyahu was in the lead

Photograph: AP

portance change was the strengthening of the right in the Knesset. At the same time, the extreme right, notably the Mafdal party, which advocates expelling the Palestinians, did less well.

Mr Netanyahu's programme is well known. He is against the Oslo accords but will not reverse them. He will not evacuate Hebron, the Palestinian city in which Israeli settlers live. He will close Orient House, the Palestinians' political headquarters in East Jerusalem.

He says he will insist that the Palestinians "live up to their obligations" under Oslo. He has called for a reconvening of the Madrid conference of 1991, attended by Israel, the Palestinians, Syria and Jordan. He says he will not talk to the Palestinians about the future of Jerusalem.

It is doubtful if Mr Netanyahu will go much farther at this stage. He may even try to show that he does not want confrontation with the Palestinians by allowing them to resume

working in Israel. Palestinian political leaders are aghast at what has happened, but this is partly a result of their earlier over-optimism.

Even if Mr Peres had won, he would not have had the majority in the Knesset he needed to move to the next, and most contentious, stage of the Oslo process. He would have been accused of relying on Arab votes. One of his supporters said yesterday: "He would have needed a brigade of bodyguards to defend him."

Mr Netanyahu has two scores to settle after the election. The first is with the Israeli Arabs who voted largely for Mr Peres.

They might have put him into the lead, but for the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon. According to one report, they cast about 80,000 blank ballot papers in the election for the prime minister, which would have been enough to save Mr Peres. If this turns out to be true then he will have paid a high price for Operation Grapes of Wrath last month.

The second score for Mr Netanyahu to settle is with President Bill Clinton, who made little effort to conceal his preference for Mr Peres. It is possible that Mr Netanyahu will covertly try to persuade American Jews to withdraw support for Mr Clinton in his re-election bid in November. On the other hand, Mr Netanyahu will probably not want to start a feud with the US in which he will lose more than he can gain.

Mr Netanyahu has pledged not to give up the Golani

Heights. This rules out any serious negotiations with Syria over a full peace treaty, though he says that he wants to normalise relations.

One of the problems which

Mr Netanyahu will face on taking power was underlined yesterday when two Israeli soldiers were killed and five wounded by a roadside bomb in southern Lebanon. They were the first Israeli soldiers to be killed by Hezbollah, the Lebanese guerrilla movement, since the Israeli bombardment in April.

Soldiers' votes still to be counted

STEPHANIE NOLEN

votes to the right of the general population.

Among the few thousand halots of prisoners awaiting counting is, presumably, that of Yigal Amir, sentenced to life for the murder of Yitzhak Rabin, last November.

The rest of the halots come from a few thousand people hospitalised on voting day, from 200 sailors, and from "few thousand" Israelis working overseas, as diplomats and representatives of Israeli industry.

But the race is not yet over. Israel has a conscript army, randomly recruited, and their voting habits may be split, just like the nation itself.

Hamas and settlers breathe sigh of relief

STEPHANIE NOLEN
Hebron

"Hamas is happy about this. And no one else cares," Osama Naimouch, 22, unemployed and cynical far beyond his years, gestures down his crowded street in this Israeli-occupied West Bank city.

"You will meet a few people here who support Hamas and who are glad today because they think this will be the end of co-operation between Israel and the Palestinians. The end of the peace process."

"But most people - well, Peres, Netanyahu, they are the same thing for us. Neither of them is ever going to do any-

thing for Hebron, or for the Palestinians."

In Hebron and elsewhere in the West Bank, the news of Binyamin Netanyahu's victory in the Israeli election was met largely with a lack of interest from the people who might have thought he would have to lose.

"Netanyahu tells the truth, we know where we stand with him. He speaks straight, not like Peres, who talks about peace and then keeps hushing settlements."

Mr Abu Eyshe, also an out-of-work labourer, speculated that a Likud government might ease the closure, because "they understand capitalism, better than the Socialists in Labour,

following a string of suicide attacks three months ago.

"What do we care if there is Labour or Likud? Things never get better here."

His neighbour, Faisal Abu Eyshe, said Mr Netanyahu might be an improvement from a Palestinian perspective.

"Netanyahu tells the truth, we know where we stand with him. He speaks straight, not like Peres, who talks about peace and then keeps hushing settlements."

Mr Abu Eyshe, also an out-of-work labourer, speculated that a Likud government might ease the closure, because "they understand capitalism, better than the Socialists in Labour,

and they know it is better for them if we are working in Israel."

It is the implications of this Jewish vote which are significant for Palestinians, says political analyst Ghassan Khatib.

The apathy with which West Bankers greeted the election result is only to be expected: what can people imagine worse than this closure? How bad could Mr Netanyahu's government be worse for Palestinians than Labour has been?

But Mr Khatib, who was part of the Palestinian delegation to both the Washington and Madrid peace talks, said that the election results have worrying long-term implications for Palestinians.

"The possibility of progress

in this peace process in the next four years is much less than over the previous four years," he said.

He noted that Likud may postpone indefinitely the implementation of already delayed parts of the Israeli/PLO peace deal, such as military withdrawal from Hebron. Any compromise on the issue of Jerusalem looks unlikely.

"The worst news for us is not that Netanyahu won and Peres lost. It's that the results show a political shift in Jewish Israel to the right, to the extreme right, to hard-line politics. It shows Israel is a country of people who want to have their cake and eat it, a country not politically mature enough for peace."

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Johanna

uncertain of prospect for peace



Waste paper: A man marches over a mass of election posters and leaflets covering the street outside the Likud party headquarters in Jerusalem

Photograph: AP

US vows that Oslo process will continue

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

Biting back its disappointment at the apparent upset victory of the Likud leader, Binyamin Netanyahu, in Wednesday's Israeli election, the United States yesterday vowed to press ahead with its search for peace in the Middle East, irrespective of who forms the new government in Jerusalem.

"Our policy will remain the same," President Bill Clinton said in a first reaction to the growing likelihood that the Labour party will be ousted from office. "If Israel is prepared to take risks for peace, we will do our best to reduce the risks and increase the security of those who do that."

Indeed, Mr Clinton noted that it was a Likud prime minister, Menachem Begin, who set in motion the peace process, inviting then Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to address the Knesset in 1977, and two years later signing a peace treaty with Egypt, the first with one of Israel's Arab neighbours.

The President also claimed to

detect some softening of Mr Netanyahu's hardline approach at the close of the campaign. "We have to wait and see," he told reporters, but whatever the result, the US would continue its support for "the people of Israel and the process of peace".

Even so, a Netanyahu victory, implying renewed Jewish settlements on the West Bank and an uncompromising stance on the return of the Golan Heights to

Syria, will vastly complicate the US-sponsored peace process. For that reason, the Clinton administration had delivered everything short of a formal endorsement of Mr Peres.

So close will be the result, officials here say, that whoever wins will not be able to claim a mandate. But relations between the US and Israel are bound to worsen at least in the short term, if it is the Likud leader.

Whatever the results, the United States will continue its policy of support for the people of Israel, for the democratic process there and for the process of peace, and our policy will be the same. If Israel is prepared to take risks for peace, we are determined to do our best to reduce the risks and increase the security of those who do that. **President Bill Clinton**

A political catastrophe is in the off-

ing — for Israel, for the Middle East and for the whole world. **Günter Verheugen**, foreign-affairs spokesman for the German Social Democrats

The Zionist regime is expansionist and supports massacres by nature. Changing this regime's pawns does not result in so much change in its policies. **Tehran radio**

The situation is going to be a bit

ADEL DARWISH

For the first time in half a century, Arab readers were treated to massive press coverage of an Israeli election.

The Palestinian press showed some division along Israeli political lines. Elsewhere, reactions were more confused.

An editorial in the Gaza-based Palestinian daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, said a Likud

victory with Binyamin Netanyahu as Prime Minister would be better for the Palestinians since his policy would inevitably lead to "international isolation of Israel and pressures from the United States similar to the pressures that isolated [the last Likud prime minister Yitzhak] Shamir".

But the majority of Palestinian papers quoted the Palestine leader Yasser Arafat's call for victory with Binyamin Netanyahu as Prime Minister would be better for the Palestinians since his policy would inevitably lead to "international isolation of Israel and pressures from the United States similar to the pressures that isolated [the last Likud prime minister Yitzhak] Shamir".

Israelis to side with the peace camp". In much of the Arab press news gave way to commentary. Commentators accused Israel of aggression, and took a cynical view of the election as a diversion from the suffering of the Palestinians. "Today, the Arabs study, examine and discuss the Israeli election results, as if there was a difference between Likud and Labour consideration of Arab lives," was the scathing comment of Jihad El Khazen, editor of *Al-Hayat*. "[Shimon] Peres is no different from Netanyahu," said a leader in the Qatari daily *Al-Orouba*, "they are two faces of the same Zionist coin".

Israel's partners in the peace process, who are bracing themselves to deal with Mr Netanyahu, had a more guarded reaction.

"Policies, not personalities, will decide the fate of the Middle East peace process," said a commentator on Cairo radio.

The Jordanian paper *Al-Rai* said what mattered was the next Israeli government's commitment to continue the peace talks, regardless of the election results.

'Peres doomed Qana, so Qana doomed Peres'

The Arabs view Netanyahu's victory with despondency and even fear, writes Robert Fisk

Back in the Sixties, they made a film about the superpowers' attempt to prevent planet Earth colliding with the sun. Based around the newsroom of the old *Daily Express*, it ended with the paper's printers setting two front page headlines. One said "World Saved". The other announced: "World Doomed."

No troublemaker is more widely cultivated than President Assad," Stephen Rosefield wrote in the *Washington Post*. "... Syria is now a much-reduced power that remains ready to play the spoiler but seems unprepared for the heavy political lifting at home that it would take to fit it out for a serious peace initiative."



Arafat: Signed up for peace

Syria, it seems, is a "terrorist" state obstinately refusing peace because it wants the return of all of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. Even Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan has been beating his drum, warning of pressures that may be brought to bear on Syria.

And it does not take much imagination to see how a new Israeli-American alliance could be engineered to isolate Syria, to attack "terrorist" camps inside Syria's frontiers. There are those, like the Lebanese journalist Jihad Zein, who believe there are "Lukuds" among the Arab nations — he has named Syria and Saudi Arabia — which would in reality be happy to see four years of Netanyahu rule because they are not yet ready for normalisation with Israel. But this is more an attempt to deal with the "world doomed" headline than with political reality.

As another Lebanese writer observed, "the lie of the 'peace process' has been stripped away by Netanyahu's victory. Now we [will] find out how the Americans tell their people that Israel doesn't want its peace any more. And be sure of one thing: they will blame the Arabs."

At least one Lebanese ex-prisoner of the Israeli Jamal Mahroum, speculated that it was the Qana massacre — which revolted so many Israeli Arabs — that lost Shimon Peres his vital votes. "Peres doomed Qana, so Qana doomed Peres," he said with satisfaction.

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the leader page

An A for bravery, but Blunkett must do more

Each generation forms deep loves and hates for the schools and teachers it grew up with, and then inflicts its reaction on the next generation. Perhaps this is a crude but effective explanation for the pendulum swings that bedevil education policy.

A motley gathering of intelligent and idealistic young men and women, who had grown up in the restrictive school environments of the 1940s and 1950s, began themselves to take over the teaching of a new generation in the 1960s and 1970s. They instinctively and understandably abhorred the chalk-scraping, restrictive life they had themselves suffered, in which too many be-gowned and mortar-boarded teachers monotonously confronted grumpy and bored children, who had been separated at the age of 11 by a divisive examination. They refused to view those two-by-two ranks as greyly uniform (and greyly uniformed) minds, all ready for authoritarian rote-feeding. Instead, they believed their duty was to uncork the bubbling love of learning naturally lying at the child's brimming core. And from that well-spring of inborn curiosity, knowledge and understanding would inexorably bloom.

Their view was not a particularly party political one, even though, in practice, it was usually associated with the left. But it was the fancy of the time, fuelled avidly by the psychologists, sociologists and pedagogues who most

abstractly articulated its mood. For maybe 30 years, and still even today, our universities and teaching training colleges imbued prospective teachers with an ideology which we call, for shorthand, "child-centred".

It all started honestly and innocently, as a programme for modernisation and reform, but it has ended in tears. Not the tears of the authoritarian right, which rails against progressive methods, about which we need care little – but the real tears of failed children, especially less educationally privileged ones, who have tripped off to secondary school with barely the tools to complete a coherent written paragraph, or to divide two numbers in their head.

Sometimes, over the past two decades or so, it has seemed as if teachers were the only people incapable of recognising the simple truth that too many children were being failed early in life by a schooling system that did not teach them basic and vital skills. Everyone else could see it, why not them?

Then, increasingly over the past decade, teachers began to accept the new, common-sensible wisdom – that a mixture of one-to-one teaching and front-of-class instruction made better sense than leaving children to try to find everything out for themselves. Quite why it took so long for the profession to recognise that teaching requires more structure than it was being given is hard to fathom, since it is obvious to any suc-

cessful parent that nothing creates greater alarm and emotional chaos in a young child than an absence of structure and discipline, purpose and routine in their daily lives. Confusion is no frame of mind for learning, any more than monotonic tedium.

But the main reason it has taken so long is that this message to teachers has been wrapped around a nasty barb. They have been vilified, and their professionalism belittled, in the same breath in which they have been invited to accept that their teacher trainers and advisers sold them short.

For that reason, it was brave of



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undue agony or inhibiting fear. Yes, children now need to be prepared for a lifetime of flexible working, in which all kinds of other skills may become even more important than spelling, or adding up. Yes, there are calculators and spellcheckers that can do most of the "basics" for them. But learning the basics is not just about mechanical skills – it is about having the confidence to hold your own, and to do it without having to ask a computer. The confident, as always, will succeed, because they will be able to ask the computer to do another, more complex task; the confused, and uncertain, will always fall behind, and the new, flexible world will be all the more frightening for them because they never quite felt secure on the first rung.

Mr Blunkett is genuinely motivated by a desire to lift that less advantaged and less confident body of children up the scale of educational achievement, for their good, and for our own. Having taken yesterday's step, he now needs to take the next step, which is to improve the quality of teachers.

It should be obvious to anyone who has been concerned about education over the past decade and a half that too much of the argument has been about administration, and not enough about how we help teachers to be better at teaching. Good teachers need to be sure enough of their own skills and knowledge to be able to impart them to others.

ers. On that score, bluntly, too many primary teachers simply do not know enough about maths or science to teach the subjects properly. In reality, most of them already recognise that reading and writing are core skills, and devote most of their time to those skills in the early years. But they too often spend too little time on the other "basic" skills.

Mr Blunkett has spoken an important truth. He needs to show how teachers will be equipped and motivated to deliver it.

Let's hear it for wimps

Wimpism: it's one of the most potent political ideas of the 1990s and it has taken the Suffragan Bishop of Hull, the Rt Rev James Jones, to spot it. Bishop Jones has identified the almost complete collapse in male confidence in parts of the country as one of our greatest afflictions. Down trodden *Coronation Street* characters such as Jack Duckworth exemplify the trend. The Bishop wants men like this to explore their feelings, as thousands of born-again Christians do regularly in America. But are we really ready for the innermost thoughts of ranks of Jack Duckworths? Perish the thought. Please Bishop Jones, handle with care.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Facts about milk and phthalates

Sir: Charles Arthur's article "Three countries ban chemicals at centre of baby milk alert" (29 May) has added to the misinformation surrounding this issue.

Evidence that phthalates are "xenoestrogens" is much weaker than Mr Arthur suggests. There is as yet no agreed test method for screening chemicals for their oestrogenic potential. Tests currently in use have produced widely differing, often conflicting results. No phthalates have yet been proven to be oestrogenic.

Phthalates are not used in PVC food packaging or wrapping manufactured in the UK. It is not true to say that Sweden has decided to phase out the use of PVC. No such decision has been taken. It is true that the government has asked the Swedish Environmental Protection Board and the Swedish Chemical Inspectorate to undertake studies on PVC to be completed by the end of June 1996.

Nor is the picture of the German market accurate. While it is true that some local authorities have taken steps to limit PVC, this was solely due to strong campaigning by pressure groups. The vast majority of municipalities have never had any limitation against PVC and indeed the trend has been for local authorities to rescind earlier limitations once they had become acquainted with the scientific basis of PVC's use.

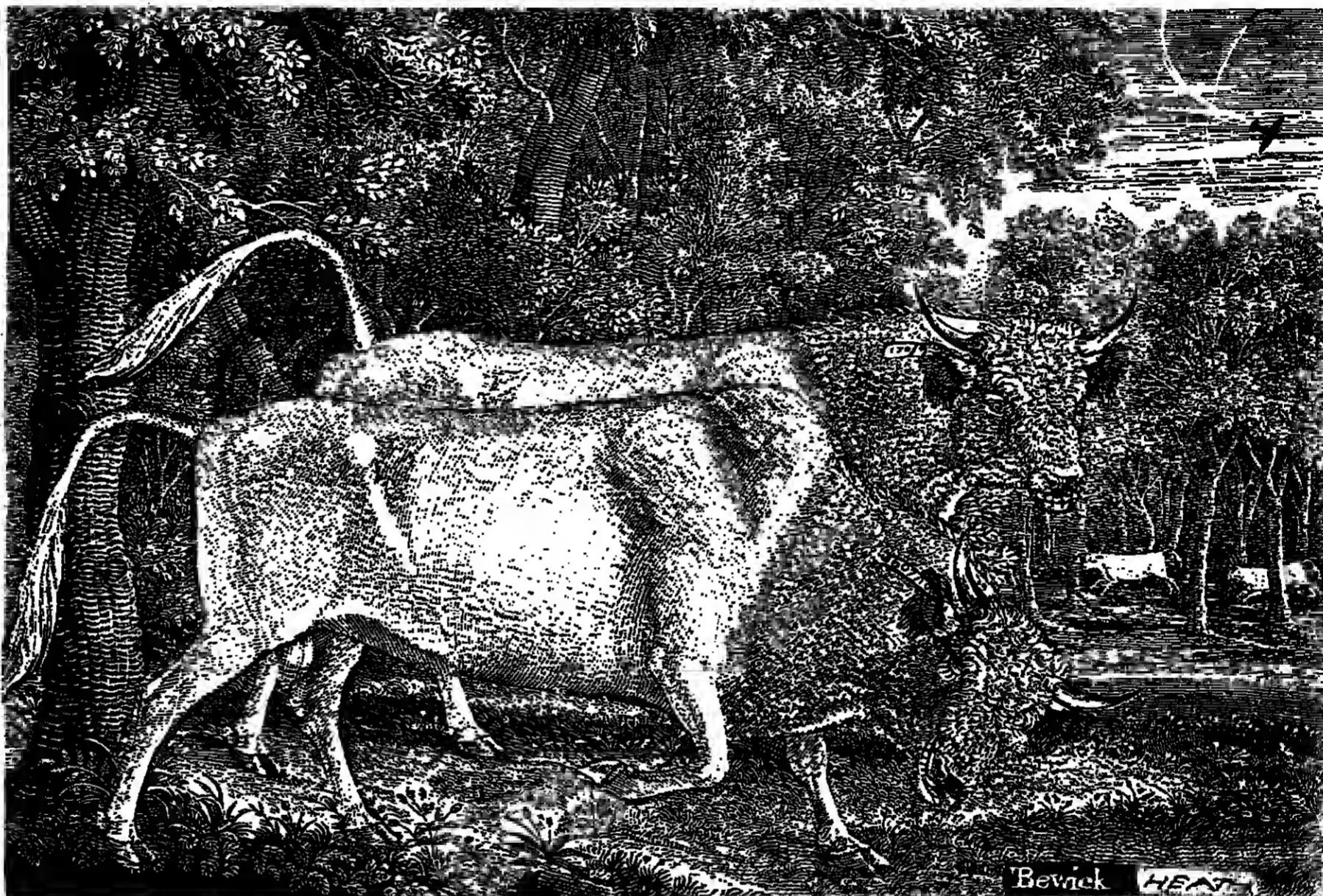
Finally the Swedish government has not banned phthalates. The study published by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency did not arrive at any firm conclusions, nor was it intended to, and the government has not taken any action based on the report. As phthalates are readily photodegradable and biodegradable, they are highly unlikely to persist in the environment.

Similarly, in Germany, no governmental agency has taken any action against phthalates. Where in the limited number of cases PVC was restricted, the motivation was to prevent its use in construction applications. A large proportion of these are in rigid PVC which does not make use of any plasticiser, phthalate or otherwise.

PHILIP K LAW
Issues Director
The British Plastics Federation
London EC2

Sir: You report that other countries, notably Sweden, Denmark and Germany, are taking precautionary action to phase out PVC. So are many local and regional governments and communities abroad, as well as retailers and businesses. These precautionary steps are being taken because the problems with PVC go well beyond phthalates in baby milk.

Phthalates are found in baby milk (and in biscuits, parmesan cheese, gravy granules, chocolate cakes etc) because they are widespread in the environment and, now, in the food chain. Phthalates are produced almost entirely – 95 per cent according to the chemical industry – for use in PVC. Dioxins, also significant "gender benders" as well as suspected carcinogens, are also produced with PVC. Virtually all PVC can be replaced by PVC-free alternatives already in use. Stop producing and using PVC and 95 per cent of phthalates entering the environment can be stopped. Obviously, removal of



Grazing in this beautiful meadow, on a glorious summer's afternoon, you'd never know there was a war on'

contaminants from baby milk is essential (letter, 29 May), but unfortunately this will not happen while PVC is still being produced.

SARAH J BURTON
Campaign Director, Greenpeace UK
London N1

Sir: It is hardly surprising that there has been such an emotional reaction to the Government's disclosure that significant quantities of phthalates have been found in baby formula milks ("Cover-up claim in baby milk chemicals row", 27 May).

For years the health industry has sought to persuade people to adopt a responsible lifestyle to the extent that we now feel guilty if we fail to have our cervical smears, mammograms or serum cholesterol undertaken. We anticipate an early and painful death if we smoke, eat saturated fats or take too little exercise.

Now, in the highly emotive area of bottle feeding babies, we are told that we might just be poisoning their future sexual potential, but that we must not worry as the risk is so very small. Really, the health industry cannot have it both ways.

Dr WILLIAM A HART
Brough, East Yorkshire

Sir: The furore over phthalates in milk highlights the fundamental problems arising when scientific issues have public importance. The reluctance of government officials to release more details suggests they are worried the public will not be able to assess the evidence. Whether or not this is true, it is a timely reminder that every citizen these days is faced

with public issues of increasing technical and scientific complexity.

It is vital for the public understanding of science to continue to improve and one factor in ensuring this is to maintain a healthy science research base. In this context Tom Wilkie's article (28 May) makes depressing reading. He points out that the government funded research and development planned for next year is £31m per week less than in 1985. Scientific underfunding will inevitably lead to scientific illiteracy.

Dr W N CATTORD
Department of Physics
University of Surrey

Sir: Diane Coyle (27 May) denigrates breastfeeding as too inconvenient for the working mother. If mothers are to breastfeed, it is the responsibility of government and employers to support and facilitate this by providing adequate maternity leave and/or a combination of workplace creches and flexible breastfeeding breaks. Instead we are given the conflicting messages that although the Department of Health would like us to breastfeed for a year, the Department of Social Security is willing to allow us only 18 weeks statutory paid maternity leave, and we have no legal right to breastfeeding breaks during working hours. It is this ludicrous contradiction which forces mothers to make a difficult and unnecessary choice between career or breastfeeding.

IMOGEN COOPER
Pitsford, Northamptonshire

Dr Carey is a good archbishop

Sir: Paul Valley's article (29 May) "Simple preacher tries on a pontiff's robes" misrepresents the Archbishop of Canterbury. The picture bears no resemblance to the Archbishop with whom I frequently travel, and have grown to respect enormously in the time I have worked with him.

Like his predecessor, he has no pretensions to a papal position in the Anglican Communion. He is well aware he has no jurisdiction outside England, except in Sri Lanka, Bermuda and the Falkland Islands. More often he has to resist the high expectations which other provinces place upon him.

The Archbishop only travels to dioceses and provinces which invite him. These invitations pile up here in large numbers from the more "democratic" provinces such as the US, Canada and Australia. The Archbishop has restricted the number of overseas visits he makes because of his heavy responsibilities in this country.

Dr Carey is often at his strongest when he meets heads of state and other significant leaders. He has a rare ability to speak simply, sensitively and clearly to very varied audiences. This should not be confused with lack of rigour or intellectual ability. The standing ovations he received from an extraordinarily wide variety of audiences in the US last week belie the accusations made in Mr Valley's article.

Comparisons between Dr Runcie

and Dr Carey are pointless. Surely the valid questions are: "Was Dr Runcie a good archbishop?" and "Is Dr Carey a good archbishop?" From my experience worldwide, the answer to both questions is undoubtedly "Yes!"

The Revd CANON
ANDREW DEUCHAR
Lambeth Palace
London SE1

The writer is the Archbishop of Canterbury's Secretary for Anglican Communion Affairs

Education reform

Sir: I was interested in the comments of Andrew Belsey (Letters, 24 May), suggesting that Labour's proposed reform of higher education maintenance, with a 20-year repayment system, ignored older graduates.

Our proposals specifically spell out that repayment was income contingent. If retirement income fell below the repayment threshold, it followed that an older person would not have to continue paying into their seventies.

The present system offers no loans beyond the age of fifty. In order to assist older students, we are also asking the Dearing Committee to examine whether individual learning accounts could be used to save for university maintenance costs as well as for training and learning programmes. DAVID BLUNKETT MP
(Sheffield Brightside, Lab)
House of Commons
London SW1

Honest debate about pay needed

Sir: Last week Bill Morris, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, rejected an incomes policy out of hand (report, 22 May). This will not curtail debate on pay – "fat cat" scandals and speculation about a minimum wage will set to that.

But there is an urgent need for a full discussion of the challenges raised by pay issues. The implications of a minimum wage for differentials, the reaction in the public sector after years of restraint, and the breaking of the link between pay and performance at executive level (a different kind of differential exercise) all demand serious attention.

Employees, employers and their representatives need to start considering how past mistakes could be avoided in the context of a new government. The current overspill of the public sector borrowing requirement underlines how difficult it will be to hold down public spending. It is more than 17 years since the 5 per cent pay round of 1978-79 collapsed, heralding the Winter of Discontent. Now relevant parties seem determined once again to take up opposing positions in public before repeating old mistakes. If an honest, grown-up debate about pay does not take place soon, between all interested players, we will be quoting again the line about history taking place the first time as tragedy and the second time as farce.

MARK UNSWORTH
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Chariot rage

Sir: Even the Greeks were not first (Letters, 29 May). In 2 Kings 9:20, we hear that "The driving is like the driving of Jehu son of Nimshi, for his drives furiously!" Chariot rage?

THE REV. IAN S PARTRIDGE
Parish of the Barkwith Group
East Barkwith, Lincolnshire

essay

You have been silent too long about racism in Britain

Rita, my friend in the North, once a proud equal opportunities officer, now a management consultant with a flash red smile and BMW, informs me that these days it is passé to bring up the cause of racial equality. Mention it in polite company, she warns, and "Nobody will invite you round again. It's yesterday's talk."

Less fashion-conscious critics make more serious denunciations. Many genuinely believe race equality initiatives are a distraction, or that they are divisive and destructive. Martin Mears, the elected president of the Law Society, describes anti-discrimination measures as "corrupt and debased". Leo McKinstry, once an obscure local Labour councillor, has been inflated into a commentator not because he can write but because he can rant against race equality measures.

This month, the Express newspaper launched, with undie enthusiasm, *The End of Racism*, by the American academic Dinesh Desouza (from Goa) who argues that segregation was good for African Americans and that anti-racists cause more damage than racists by making excuses for blacks. At a public meeting, a black British journalist who agreed with him proclaimed: "Blacks need to get off their backsides and stop complaining." Many ambitious black and Asian individuals would echo this view.

A top Asian television executive claims that racism is not a problem but that "race wallops" need to keep up the myth that it is. When Birmingham Council equality units were "downsized" in February this year, pundits wrote joyful letters to the local newspaper.

Government ministers such as Ann Widdecombe tirelessly propagate the heartening message that we are much better at "race relations" than those xenophobic French and Germans. White liberals – some close friends of mine, who once simply loved going to anti-apartheid rallies – have had enough, they say, of this special pleading and endless culpability. The upbeat 1990s are about taking charge, not whingeing. And if things are so bad, how come that hardworking Trevor McDonald has made it, eh?

It is 20 years since the Race Relations Act. The Commission for Racial Equality has just had its budget cut. Is this because the problems the CRE was designed to deal

Facing the rage of third-generation black and Asian Britons who cannot claim their place in this society, influential whites and blacks have abdicated their responsibility to lead.'

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown demands action

with are receding or has the cause lost popularity?

Much has indeed been achieved. In spite of the collapse of the political consensus of the 1960s which led to the Act, in spite of the backlash and the deregulation of so much other employment protection, the Race Relations law has survived. In April, for example, two Asian risk assessors won £29,000 each in a race discrimination case against Lloyd's.

We now have extraordinarily successful black and Asian scientists, industrialists, artists, media and sports stars. They see this country as a land of opportunity. Ongoing research at the Policy Studies Institute shows that East African Asians, Chinese and Indians are outstripping whites in some fields. Even more encouragingly, big companies now value diversity as an economic asset.

According to the British Crime Survey there are 130,000 racially motivated incidents a year. Several black men have died in police custody; others have received huge pay-offs after alleged maltreatment by officers. A young black motorist has just been awarded £320,000 for one such incident. Since the failure of the criminal justice system to punish the killers of Stephen Lawrence, it is hard to find anyone in the black community who feels the law protects them.

Why are there so many people in denial about these massive problems? One reason is the visible evidence of advancement: like in the United States, where many people of colour have reached positions of unimaginable power, people are turning against affirmative action even though racism remains a fact of

life for the rest. American blacks are among the richest and most powerful black people in the world. Among the wealthiest people in this country there is always more than a sprinkling of Asians who have made good. And yet the exclusion of the rest has worsened. Both countries find it hard to accept that the forces of progress and regression coexist.

Then there is the problem of race and politics. The political parties recently signed a compact with the CRE agreeing not to use race as a weapon. But both main parties are getting twitchy. Unpopularity may force Tories to play the race card. The danger of such dirty tactics being employed was demonstrated in the last election. And if this tactic is used again, Labour will be vulnerable. Hence the party's palpable silence.

Roy Hattersley, interviewed for my forthcoming Radio 5 Live programme, *No Entry*, says: "There's been no time when Labour has been so silent on immigration and race. Until two years ago we had at least an annual debate on community relations and immigration. It related immigration to race relations and the lives of those who came here 40 years ago. I think Labour – shall I put it charitably? – is being extremely cautious at the moment. Now either you follow the salamander and meet the issue head on or do the opposite and Labour at present thinks it is best not to meet it head on." There is also the issue of marginal seats where white voters, anxious about Labour and immigration, could swing the result.

Professor Zig Layton Henry of Warwick University, an expert on race and politics, is convinced that Labour has decided it has much more to gain by pushing women's issues than race equality. This week the BBC transmitted, for the first time ever, a programme where the three party leaders were questioned by Asians about their policies. Only Paddy Ashdown dealt with racism, and it was clear that Tony Blair was uncomfortable with many questions, especially those about problems ethnic minorities have getting selected.

So far only three Asians have been selected as Labour candidates. Even the Tories have seven. And yet the Labour Party expects black votes as a continuing act of faith. Many ethnic minority youngsters I meet don't trust the party and will not vote at all, although they are desperate for change. Charter 88 and the National Black Caucus are campaigning to encourage the black vote, but more is needed. People are also worried about New Labour's image. Where are the black faces among the bright young acolytes around Blair and Co?

We must also confront the withdrawal of white (leftie) liberals from the ideals of race equality and multiculturalism. Suddenly they are sending their children to church schools or elsewhere far away where they will not be contaminated by Diwali. Some are still reeling from the shock waves of the



Yasmin Alibhai-Brown: 'much has been achieved ... but inequality and injustice are still pervasive' Photograph: Dillon Bryden

Rushdie affair which revealed their own limits of tolerance. Others are in anger over their identity in Europe and in Britain. Others still are disengaging from past labels. These are people whom Patrick Wright, the culture critic, describes as "refugees from the collapsing left, stepping out from behind all that discarded ideological baggage to catch up with the opportunities of a world where everything seems to hang fire".

But it is not just whites who are responsible for the devolution of race equality. Blacks and Asians are playing their part, too, including activists on the front line. Too many bang on as if nothing has changed, when much patently has. They don't accept that we have serious problems within the black and Asian communities which cannot be explained away by racism. The memories of the

unpleasant and endless quarrels generated by Black Sections must in part be responsible for the way new Labour is behaving.

Too much energy is wasted on battles between blacks obsessed with historical, unforgivable white guilt and whites, hell bent on total extermination.

The quarrels between the Anti-Nazi League and the Anti-Racist Alliance and the growing tensions between difficult ethnic and religious groups further discredit the cause. Sanctioned voices noisyly vie with each other as life passes them by.

There is a dearth of dynamic ethnic minority leaders, individuals who can inspire community as well as national respect. The old leadership, people like Bernie Grant and Paul Boateng, came through local politics and/or community-based groups. These traditional

routes are no longer delivering. Perhaps we will need to look elsewhere. There are individuals like Peter Herbert of the Society of Black Lawyers, or Claude Mores of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, who seem to have what is desperately needed.

But we need more, especially those who are capable of entering the inner sanctum of the Labour Party and influencing policies which fit the dreams of those longing for change.

White politicians too must provide the kind of leadership that mature multi-racial democracy needs in the next century. They might begin by dislocating immigration from race. Even

Hattersley, who invented the equation that tight immigration policies made for better race relations, now rejects that position and feels that it has actually worsened race relations. We need political leaders who

speak out – as they do on crime and education – on the benefits that immigrants have brought to this country. We could learn from the Germans, who have research to show just what migrants have contributed to the national economy.

We are today faced with the

rage and disappointment of so many third generation black and Asian Britons who still cannot claim their place in this country. It is tragic that whites and blacks with influence have abdicated their responsibility to lead and so failed to turn Britain into a standard bearer for racial equality in Europe.

Roy Hattersley's interview will be broadcast on 'No Entry', part of Radio Five Live's 'Race Around Britain' series, which begins on Saturday. The writer is a research fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research.

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Radio 3 has got it in for jazz lovers

Recently I said that Radio 3 didn't know what it was doing with its jazz policy. I would like to apologise for this. It does know what it is doing. It is trying to get rid of the jazz audience altogether, by killing it off.

I am not just referring to its determination to wear us all into an early grave through having to stay up till half an hour after midnight for its regular *Jazz Notes* offering, and give us terminal fatigue. I have spotted a new tactic on the part of Radio 3 – to give jazz listeners heart attacks and apoplexy. It is well-known that jazz fans are among the most pedantic and nit-picking of all people, fanatics of accuracy with recording dates, personnel details etc. If they spot one bad mistake, they go red in the face. Give them half a dozen, and they might keel over.

Such was my feeling, at any rate, after listening to a 15-minute programme last Friday on Radio 3 devoted to the music of the jazz pioneer Jelly Roll Morton. It was so misin-



Miles Kington

formed and crazily wrong that it must have been deliberate. For example... But decide for yourself. If you are a jazz fan, see how many mistakes you can spot about Morton and jazz in this paragraph of the script, transcribed exactly as I recorded it.

"Throughout the Twenties and Thirties he toured America and became renowned not only for his music but also for his flamboyant dress, showmanship and eccentric accessories: he wore diamonds in his teeth and in his socks and garters."

"Musically he had a huge influence on the pianists of the Thirties. Earl Hines, Fats Waller and Erroll Garner among them, who all paid him tribute in their own work. The pianists Carl and Spencer Williams also paid him tribute in the song 'Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None of my Jelly Roll', which we're going to hear now played by the Sidney Bechet (sic) and his New Orleans Feetwarmers again.

"It's followed by a virtuosic farewell from Jerry, er, Jelly Roll Morton. It was so misin-

formed and crazily wrong that he was.

3. Only on Radio 3 do they think of Erroll Garner as a jazz hero of the 1930s: he was not yet out of his teens in 1940.

4. There is no such person as Carl Williams. The man who wrote the song was Clarence Williams.

5. "Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None of My Jelly Roll" has nothing to do with Jelly Roll Morton at all. It refers to a piece of sexual double entendre which was common in black American parlance of the time, and which Morton, too, borrowed for his nickname.

6. This means that the following record in this special Jelly Roll Morton quartet of an hour had nothing to do with Morton at all, being written by someone else and played by someone else.

7. He may turn up in reference books as Franklin Taft Melrose, but he was never known in jazz history as anything but Frank Melrose.

8. And finally, though you won't get this from the script,

you would have been disappointed by Jelly Roll Morton's "virtuosic" performance of "Tom Cat Blues" if you had stayed to listen to it. This is because the man on Radio 3 didn't play a record of "Tom Cat Blues" at all: he played a very different Morton piece called "King Porter".

This may sound to you like jazz pedantry, and of course it is, and I enjoyed it tremendously. All I am saying is that if you can get eight fairly basic errors about jazz into 133 words of text, which is about one error every 16 words, then it is probably not an accident. It is deliberate. I can only imagine that the head of Radio 3 has ordered his minions to start putting out little jazz programmes riddled with mistakes in order to give heart attacks to those jazz listeners who have not yet succumbed to terminal fatigue.

Put it another way: if I keep over with a red face and pop out in the near future, I want a warrant for murder to be issued against a man called Nicholas Kenyon.

Jelly Roll Morton

the commentators

Wanted: an enterprise culture for the Nineties

The mood has swung against the Thatcherite business ethos of the Eighties. Now we need to build up a less divisive approach

Last week's jailing of Owen Oyston seemed to bang yet another nail in the coffin of the enterprise culture. In the wake of the Maxwell scandal and Cedric Brown, the public mood has turned sharply against business. Its leaders are less likely to be seen as wealth-creating heroes than as self-serving fat cats, and according to opinion polls, only 15 per cent of the British public now trust multinationals to be honest.

There are good reasons for the swing of the pendulum against the Eighties enterprise culture. Hundreds of thousands of firms disappeared during a recession that owed as much to government policy as to the business cycle, and millions have suffered from the relentless down-sizing of big firms that has now prompted even Stephen Roach, the guru of down-sizing, to admit that it may have left American business not so much lean as anorexic.

In retrospect it is easy to see just how flawed was the enterprise culture that Margaret Thatcher so assiduously promoted. While there was much to be said for cutting red tape, restrictive union power and state subsidies, her policies promoted a very narrow and exclusive

idea of business. It was portrayed as a minority pursuit for pin-striped young men and swaggering self-made businessmen, as more about deals than making things or providing a service, and more about hiving employees than getting the best out of them.

Unfortunately no one gains from a climate of opinion which business is always in the dock. In a capitalist system, unless risk, innovation – and greed – are rewarded, and unless firms can compete and cooperate in healthy ways, it is very hard to create wealth and jobs. The simple fact that prosperity has as much to do with culture as with traditional economic concerns such as inflation, investment and interest rates, has been taken much more seriously in recent years.

In America, for example, the Democrats are considering new rules that would give tax advantages to responsible "A-Corporations" that train and consult their staff. In Japan the primary concern has been to make business more creative in areas such as software where they have singularly failed to gain a substantial market share. In Germany, business leaders are worried about

the lack of a venture capital industry, and the risk-taking culture that goes with it.

One might have expected Britain, too, to be asking hard questions about how we can learn from the mistakes of the Eighties without returning to the failed corporatism of the Seventies. But although John Major talks of making Britain the "enterprise centre of Europe" and Tony Blair is keen to reassure business of Labour's responsibility, there is little sign of fresh thinking.

Few politicians have yet understood that culture is as important as exchange rate mechanisms and tax cuts. Relatively few commentators are familiar with analysing cultures, partly because they see them as less tangible than the hard facts of economics, and partly for the simpler reason that they have spent so many years juggling with macroeconomics variables.

The first priority is to get away from the exclusive image that business took on in the Eighties. Fortunately one of the better legacies of Thatcherism is that a remarkably high proportion of young people want to be self-employed. Nearly 800,000 women now run their own



GEOFF MULGAN

No one gains when business is always in the dock

businesses. It is striking how far the most popular contemporary business heroes – like Anita Roddick, Shami Ahmed or Richard Branson – are from the traditional image of staid white men in suits. Yet too many of the institutions dealing with business, from TECs to local banks, are still cast in an old image that is alienating wealth creators of the future.

The second step is to reject the idea that it makes good business

sense to treat employees as disposable commodities. Few slogans have encouraged more cynicism than the mantra "our people are our greatest asset" which has usually coincided with swingeing job cuts. All too often employers have expected ever greater commitment and longer hours from their staff, but shown no commitment back. Yet in an economy ever more based on information and knowledge these styles of management are becoming obsolete. Highly skilled staff can literally walk out of the door, not only in software and multimedia but also in what are now high technology manufacturing sectors like steel and cars, where efficient production depends on motivating employees to share information and solve problems for themselves.

So far, the historic shift away from an economy dominated by financial capital to one dominated by human capital has yet to filter through to boardrooms, policy-makers and stock exchanges. But already many firms are trying to catch up. Some are looking at the arts and even theatre to understand how to motivate people to be creative. Others have set up their own quasi-univer-

sities (like Unipart's university in which there are no examinations and no qualifications) to inculcate a commitment to learning. Alternatively, some companies are still trying to give significant shareholdings to their employees – a kind of active popular capitalism that contrasts sharply with the passive ownership of privatised utility shares.

These are valuable pointers to a more forward-looking enterprise culture. But a more informed business culture also has many other properties that render the Eighties enterprise culture obsolete. One is that the public is far more judgemental about firms' records on things like the environment. Another is that since many more jobs require people to work with other people, there is a far greater premium for interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence rather than macho aggression. A third is that firms too have to work collaboratively, rather than in splendid, individualist isolation. One US study found that firms most active in strategic alliances are making 50 per cent higher returns, and the world's most dynamic industrial areas like Seattle, Silicon Valley, Singapore

and Baden-Württemberg, all rest on dense networks in which firms both compete and co-operate.

Add these together and it is not hard to imagine a very different enterprise culture to the one that took shape in the Eighties. It would be a more inclusive culture, and one more suited to an information economy in which wealth can be created almost out of nothing, as firms such as Netscape and Microsoft have shown. For politicians it may be hard to go beyond the familiar clichés about education, training and macroeconomic stability. But without an understanding that the promoters of a Thatcherite enterprise culture were at least asking the right question, even if their answers were flawed, Britain could all too easily be left not as the enterprise centre of Europe, but rather as a bit player in a global economy where the new ideas, new jobs and new firms are all emerging somewhere else.

The New Enterprise Culture, a collection bringing together authors including Charles Handy, John Kay and Helen Wilkinson, is available from Demos, price £3 (0171-353 4479).

To understand the election results in Israel, one has to look at the development of a new, religious form of Zionism, argues Iraad Malkin

The land of the Philistines

I sometimes ponder the fate of the religious brother of my secular, Zionist grandmother. In 1936 she migrated to Palestine; however, he was forbidden from doing so by his rabbi. The Jewish state, claimed the rabbi, must not be rebuilt before the coming of the Messiah. The advice was catastrophic (the Germans killed my great uncle in Poland), but nonetheless symptomatic of the Jewish-Zionist paradox: on the one hand there was a territorial, spiritual Judaism, and on the other secular Zionism.

The origins of the Zionist movement consisted in a rebellion against the kind of religious Judaism that made a virtue of a diaspora existence. Indeed, except for one religious movement, whose descendant is Israel's National Religious Party, all other Jewish religious sectors in Israel remain, until today, ostensibly non-Zionist. Their religious parties, which have made significant gains in this week's elections, are experienced veterans of the political election game in Israel. In the early Fifties their interests were mainly sectorial. But in time they changed their focus, and today their agenda has come full circle in its desire to reverse Zionism's definition of what Judaism is all about. Their success could change the face of Israel, its relations with the Arabs, and the value Israeli society attaches to the territorial aspects of "the Jewish State".

The view of Israel from abroad is too narrow and mistakenly concentrates on external aspects of the Israeli-Arab relationships. Israel's picture in the media is "event-oriented". This underplays deeper

changes of attitude and outlook, and it is precisely such changes that contextualise and even create the events. To understand Israeli society one would do well to observe its self as a Jewish state. Israel has existed as a state for almost 50 years and during this time, and especially during the three decades following the Six Day War (1967), a polarised cultural struggle has enveloped its society.

The struggle oscillates between notions of a secular, "ethnic", and historically conditioned Jewish identity (the view of secular Zionism), and the religious orientation of

One would do well to observe Israel's dilemmas and changing views of itself

Judaism. While the numbers may not seem worrying – the joint religious parties now have 25 (rather than 18 seats) in a parliament of 120, Wednesday's elections nonetheless indicate a dramatic shift towards the religious orientation. This is particularly worrying because, from the a-territorial Judaism of my great-uncle's rabbi, religious Judaism is increasingly identified with the notion of the sacred Land of Israel. The once-moderate National Religious Party moved to the ultra-right territorialists almost a generation ago; the same is now happening with the other religious sectors of Israeli political life. I found it no surprise that, for the first time in its history, almost the entire religious block supported the candidate of the right.

Historically, Zionist movements on the left and on the right claim a share in the creation of the state of Israel, in the renaissance of the Hebrew language, and in winning Israel's wars. However, the enormous energy invested in state-building left little time for secular Jews (or "free Jews", as Orthodox Jews disparagingly call them) to invest in their non-religious identity.

Jewish values have been shamed to the cultural investment of religious movements whose members cannot comprehend any definition of Judaism other than a religious one. Having invested relatively little in state- and nation-build-

ing, religious movements now find themselves in a position to metamorphose the character of the Jewish state.

What character? One can be an Englishman and maintain almost any religious belief without losing that which makes him "English". But can the same be said of a Jew? The long history of the overlap between the ethnic and the religious terminology has created a basic contradiction that no Israeli can fully solve. Perhaps inexplicably, it is inconceivable even for a "free Jew" like myself that I might convert to another religion and remain a Jew. The religious parties have been very successful in shifting the focus to their point of view by exploiting the lack of clear-cut answer to the question: "What is a Jew?" (Israel has no constitution primarily for this reason).

It is perhaps no wonder that the dogmatic slogan "Netanyahu is good for the Jews", carefully pronounced just a day before the elections, carried the day with the religious bloc and the majority of the Jewish population (55 per cent, excluding the votes of Israeli Arabs).

I could never sympathise with Orthodox Judaism, but I could respect the basic tenet shared by many Orthodox parties: the secular state is just a tool, and Jewish existence within it is best regarded as comparable to communal Jewish existence, say, in England or the US. Israel, however, is not England and the supposedly secluded religious sectors too are undergoing an Israeli acculturation.

Both ideology and the reality of life in Israel are rapidly sandpapering away the spiritual tenets of the non-Zionist Orthodox parties. The Judaism of these parties has become intimately linked with land. These elections have proven that "place" and territory have become irrevocably glued to spiritual Judaism; paradoxically the rabbis, while probably happy with their victory, should now be worried lest the cruder, nationalistic aspects of Zionism will take over their own flock.

Israel's future and its ability

to extricate itself from its domination over, and settlement among, Palestinians may depend on the "Jewish content" of the territorial space it occupies in Israel. Religious and righteous Judaism are irredentist by definition. For example, the (now Arash) city of Hebron, where Abraham is supposed to have purchased a burial plot, should, accordingly, be Jewish. By contrast, the mainstream of Zionism until the 1967 war looked for a solution for the

Jewish people "in Palestine" (a point officially made already in the Balfour declaration), not over all of it. Modern Zionism has led Jews to Israel mainly through its ports and has settled the absolute majority of Jews along Israel's Mediterranean coasts. Whereas in antiquity Jews believed they had migrated to Israel from the desert, led by Moses and settled by Joshua in the hinterland, today's demographic reality constitutes a complete reversal: in their heads Jews were returning to the "land of their fathers", but the realisation of the Return was at best approximate, and Jews mostly settled in the coastal regions of ancient Phoenicia and the cities of the Philistines (hence the name "Palestine").

How is this Mediterranean paradox connected with the religious parties, must signify that the principle of irredentism is back in full force. It builds on two major trends. On the one hand, an increasing number of secular Israelis are being told (and, it seems, con-

vinced) that Jewish identity equals religious identity. On the other hand, more and more religious Jews have come to see their Judaism as consisting of an attachment to the Sacred Land.

Shimon Peres argued against irredentism and for peace. His efforts had brought the Israeli

electorate almost to the top of the hill, from which it may be rolling backwards. When I write these lines, on the morning after the elections, the heart is as heavy as the stone of Sisyphus.

The writer is professor of Ancient History at Tel Aviv University.



Religious Israelis have come to see their Jewish identity as linked to occupying the 'land of their fathers'

You, too, could climb Mount Everest – for a price

Our consuming passion for 'safe-risk' holidays has little to do with real adventure, writes Charles Arthur

Amy Old Testament prophet would have been proud of a voice like Brian Blessed's. The actor speaks with a rolling, deep roar, sometimes muted, sometimes not. On his return this week from a third unsuccessful attempt to climb Mount Everest, Blessed was clearly in the mood to condemn the sins he had percieved there.

"I found people taking food from our tents, our ration bars hurled," he said. "People sitting in our tents while we were out – that's that's all right, it's so cold up there, it gives hard as cement, you can clear it out easily. People turning up without enough provisions or tents, hoping someone else will help them." Reaching the summit was their only desire, and they didn't care how they did it. "I was horrified that such a high mountain experienced the lowest common denominator in human behaviour."

It was not only on the mountain itself that he was appalled. "The north [Chinese] side used to be a magic place, Mallory and Irvine started from that side in the 1920s. There was a beautiful monastery. Now, the north-side base camp has huge toilets the size of four rooms – and they're overflowing," while the monastery smells Pepsi."

His voice rises to a dull roar. "In four years' time they're going to build

a hotel with a view that's the greatest on God's earth. What next? Funicular railways to the top with pressurised suits taking Yanks up for \$50,000 a go, and them complaining that the weather's bad so they can't see the historic spot where Mallory and Irvine disappeared?"

Some might be surprised that the

risk of dying on Mount Everest is still about one in 33

29,028ft mountain has fallen so dramatically to earth. But to others, many of Blessed's complaints cut no ice. Given the choice between using a vacant tent as a toilet, or wandering outside, perhaps to slip down a gully – as one person did this month – wouldn't you take the first? "Sometimes it's just survival," says Stephen Venables, the British climber who reached the summit in 1988. "Or you're confused – as happens at high altitude – or there's a genuine misunderstanding about using something. It never happened."

But to mountaineers, the allure of Everest has diminished in direct

proportion to the number of people on the mountain. "In the 1970s, you could only get on to one side of the mountain," says Venables. (The others were closed off by their governments.) "There would be one expedition in spring and one in autumn, and the people on them would be highly competent climbers – the cream – who had proved themselves elsewhere first."

And now? There were roughly 150 climbers, of varying ability, and 300 Sherpas on the mountain, as storms struck and killed a total of 11 in the past fortnight. All four countries bordering the peak now allow access – for a price, which starts at around \$10,000 – and this has led to the proliferation of companies offering to guide inexperienced mountaineers to the place above all others. Classified ads in sports magazines offer "your best chance of reaching the top of Everest". All you need is £16,000 and some mountaineering experience.

The offers have been taken up eagerly. At one point last year there were almost 40 people standing on the "roof of the world", an area about the size of a large room. One, a Texan, twirled a lariat he had brought up as a memento from friends back home. He slipped and was only saved from falling thousands of feet to his death when

his lariat caught on a rock at the edge. The true fault lies in our supermarket-adventure culture.

But which would you be more impressed by – someone who had climbed Everest, or who had topped the world's second-highest mountain? It should be the latter – K2 is technically far more demanding and, because of its remoteness, is always climbed without supplementary oxygen. Is there adventure left anywhere?

At this question, Venables almost explodes. "The Great Himalaya stretches for 2,000 miles! At its widest it's 200 or 300 miles across. There are thousands of peaks that have never been climbed there. I've done a climb that was just 18 miles from Everest, just off a popular trekking route; it took us three days of hacking through jungle just to reach the base of the mountain. You don't have to go far to find the wilderness."

And you do not have to travel to the

more remote points of the earth to find a wilderness. Consider the case of Sir Ranulph Fiennes – best known for his frost-bitten, determined walks across the Antarctic. Now he is exploring the routes of London's sewers. The risks may be low, but he is demonstrating what all the great explorers have always had – the imagination to discover the unknown, rather than merely follow someone else's packaged itinerary.

"His advice is optimistic and enthusiastic" (The British Medical Journal)

"Dr Vernon Coleman is one of our most enlightened, trenchant and sensible dispensers of medical advice" (The Observer)

Published by the European Medical Journal

"The man is a national treasure" (What Doctors Don't Tell You)

ARTHRITIS?

Helpful Advice From Dr Vernon Coleman

If you suffer from arthritis you will know only too well how it can affect your life. I am a doctor with years of experience in general practice and have diagnosed and treated countless hundreds of patients who have had this often troublesome problem.

But it isn't only doctors who can help you – there's an awful lot you can do yourself to help overcome the symptoms of arthritis. For this reason I decided to write a book which gives all the advice and information you need to help you reduce your arthritis symptoms. Thousands of people have already benefited from my advice on health matters and now you can share the information I have gathered over the years – while working as a family doctor and hospital doctor.

The book - How To Conquer Arthritis - contains all the information you're likely to need, including:

- Getting the best out of drugs
- Controlling pain
- Diet and arthritis
- Helpful alternative treatments
- What doctors can do

The advice in my book is easy-to-follow and includes a series of simple, practical tips designed to help you deal with your arthritis symptoms. I am so confident that my book can help you that you can try my advice without risk – if you don't find the book helpful then simply return it to me within 28 days of receipt and I will personally ensure that you get a full refund. To order "How to Conquer Arthritis" send a cheque or PO (payable to Healthbooks) for £9.95 to Dr Vernon Coleman, Sales Office IN34, Publishing House, Trinity Place, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 9HI (p&p is FREE). For credit card sales ring 01271 328892. We aim to despatch orders within 48 hours but please allow 28 days for delivery. And remember – our money-back guarantee means that you can order today entirely without risk.

"His advice is optimistic and enthusiastic"

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"Dr Vernon Coleman is one of our most enlightened, trenchant and sensible dispensers of medical advice"

(The Observer)

DIANE COYLE

Economics Editor

Doubt was cast on Chancellor Kenneth Clarke's optimism about economic prospects this year by a big downgrade from an authoritative outside forecast yesterday.

Although the Treasury will revise down its own forecast when it publishes an update in July, the Chancellor will continue to have one of the highest growth predictions for the UK. His current 3 per cent growth target is well out of line with yesterday's 2 per cent prediction from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, yesterday asked Mr Clarke to justify his optimism about the economy. In a letter to the Chancellor he wrote: "Just as happened last year, it would appear that growth will be lower than you forecast. Under these circumstances, will you either justify your own forecast, or accept the OECD's forecast and spell out

the implications for our public finances?" If the OECD turns out to be more accurate, tax revenues will be lower than projected in the last budget, further reducing Mr Clarke's scope for tax cuts.

In its review the organisation sounded a note of caution about government borrowing, saying that current public spending plans were "ambitious" and previous attempts to reduce government spending had had

mixed results. Future tax cuts should be matched by spending cuts, it said.

However, in its annual report on the British economy the Paris-based think-tank repeated last year's praise of the Government's economic policies for delivering sustainable, non-inflationary growth and lower unemployment. It also reviewed labour market deregulation and competition policy favourably.

The Chancellor welcomed

the report's generally favourable assessment of government policies. He noted that the OECD - which is funded by member governments - had revised down its forecasts for most countries and expected the British economy to pick up later this year.

The

new forecast cuts the growth outlook for this year from 2.4 per cent previously to 2 per cent, putting the OECD near the gloomy end of the

range of forecasts. Its economists have revised up their prediction for growth in consumer spending from 2.3 per cent to 3 per cent but scaled back their expectations for investment and exports. They also expect reductions in excess stock levels to hold back growth.

The current pause is likely to be short-lived, however, as consumer spending will underpin further economic recovery.

The OECD reckons inflation

will remain subdued with "a broadly unchanged stance for monetary policy over the coming two years." Its diagnosis that there will be no need to raise interest rates significantly remains below potential. It concluded: "The prospects are good for continuing economic expansion and further reductions in unemployment, while maintaining low inflation."

The Government was

pleased, too, by the survey's focus on the deregulation of the labour market and stimulation of competition. The OECD has long declared itself impressed by the UK's "flexible" jobs market, but this report was the first to praise competition policy too.

Privatisation had on balance been a success despite concerns about the lack of competition in the utilities, it concluded. The report said

there had been "substantial improvements in productivity and impressive real price reductions." However, it had criticisms in both areas. On the jobs front it said the main challenge was to reduce long-term unemployment and upgrade skill levels. It also said the growth in inequality meant "policy-makers may need to bear in mind the position of those at the bottom."

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Better exports to rescue industry from recession

Britain's export performance last year was better than at first thought, the Office for National Statistics said yesterday, writes Diane Coyle. Revisions to earlier figures will raise the economy's estimated growth rate last year, rescuing manufacturing from recession.

New figures show Britain's trade deficit narrowed in March from £202m to £133m in Feb-

ruary, but the April shortfall in trade with non-EU countries widened to £363m from £276m in March.

The trade news helped sterling remain near a 15-month high against the mark. It closed at DM2.35 last night, up a quarter of a pence.

Traders said that, in a break

with tradition, overseas investors were shrugging off the

Government's war on Europe and starting to look forward to the stability of a Labour government after the election.

New data for export and import prices mean the ONS has revised up estimated growth in export volumes in 1995. Analysis said this was likely to raise last year's GDP growth from 2.5 to 2.6 per cent. The new price figures also imply that the pub-

lished fall in manufacturing output in the fourth quarter will be revised away.

Jonathan Leynes, an analyst at HSBC Markets, said: "This

will turn what was previously a pretty flat trend in manufacturing output throughout last year into a gently rising trend."

The trend in the visible trade deficit is broadly flat, according to official statisticians. Exclud-

ing oil and erratic items, the underlying deficit widened to £5.2bn in the first quarter of this year from £4.7bn in the final quarter of last year.

"Erratic items flattered the March global deficit, with precious stones accounting for half the month's increase in exports. But half of April's jump in imports from non-EU countries was due to aircraft."

Source: ONS, HM Treasury

United to expand by alliances

MICHAEL HARRISON

United Utilities, the group created through the merger of North West Water and the electricity supplier Norweb, yesterday unveiled plans to expand through a series of strategic alliances into the gas and power markets.

The new strategy is likely to see the combined utility signing deals with North Sea gas suppliers and electricity generators rather than buying another water or regional electricity company outright.

Sir Desmond Pitcher, chairman, said: "We are not on the prowl. We have plenty to do integrating the businesses we have at the moment."

He was speaking as the company, the first of the wave of multi-utilities being created through the consolidation of the water and electricity industries, reported a 4 per cent drop in pretax profits to £273m after heavy restructuring charges at Norweb, increased drought costs and spending on discretionary customer initiatives.

The shares, which have put in a pedestrian performance since the merger on 1 January, slid 15p to close at 580p despite further bullish comments about the progress of integrating Norweb.

Brian Staples, chief executive, said cost savings could be achieved by supply utilities such as United Utilities working more closely with electricity generators such as National Power, particularly as the domestic energy markets will be opened up to competition in 1998 and prices squeezed.

"If you want to be a winner, then the sensible thing to do is to share the squeeze," he added.



Share the squeeze: Brian Staples and Sir Desmond Pitcher prepare strategies for competition in the market from 1998. Photograph: Edward Sykes

ScottishPower insists race 'not over yet'

MICHAEL HARRISON

ScottishPower yesterday reinforced expectations that it will raise the stakes in the bid for Southern Water by insisting that the race with the rival bidder Southern Electric was "not over yet".

The comment came as another water company on the receiving end of two hostile bids – South West Water – marshalled its defences with a 12 per cent increase in the dividend

and a £10-a-head rebate for customers.

A spokesman for the ScottishPower camp said: "We set out with the intention of securing agreement of the board. We still want to acquire Southern Water. There is a recommended alternative offer on the table. We are reviewing our options."

On Wednesday, ScottishPower's £1.56bn bid for Southern was topped by an agreed £1.6bn offer from Southern

Electric, valuing the water company at £10.03 a share. Southern Electric's cash offer is worth 975p a share.

The expectation in the market is that Scottish Power may have to raise its cash offer to £1.6bn if Scottie has insisted that it will only rebid on terms that create value for its shareholders.

Southern Electric hit back at the latest fighting talk from the Scottish camp, saying: "They can huff and puff as much as they like. The simple

fact is that we have a higher and agreed offer on the table."

Meanwhile South West pledged that it would continue to deliver value for customers and shareholders in the face of the "unsolicited and unwelcome" bid approaches from Wessex Water and Severn Trent.

The two bids will not be ruled out by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission until the end of September and it is likely to be November before the water industry regulator, Ian Byatt, has decided what level of customer rebates he will require in return for allowing either bid.

South West has begun building its defences, posting a 10 per cent increase in pre-tax profits before exceptional restructuring costs to £109m and announcing a more generous dividend policy. The company had been committed to raising the payout by 3-4 per cent a year in real terms but yesterday indicated that this would now be lifted to 5-6 per cent.

Gene Schneider poised to start Irish cables humming

MATHEW HORSMAN

Media Editor

It emerged last night that United International Holdings, controlled by the legendary cable pioneer Gene Schneider, is poised to launch an Irish channel in the UK, in league with the Irish state broadcaster RTE and UK media company Ripton Communications.

RTE would provide the programming, and may even take an equity stake. Its board was

yesterday debating the investment, which could be confirmed within the next week.

The new channel is aimed primarily at a potential audience of up to 8 million expatriate and first-generation Irish who live in Britain, and will broadcast a mix of soaps, drama, comedy, music and news from 12 noon to midnight daily, taken from RTE's schedule. The Irish broadcast spends £120m a year on programmes.

The Irish service will be also available in Australia, Canada

and South Africa, its backers in the autumn.

In the end, it hopes to be able to reach a significant proportion of the Irish diaspora, which could total 50 million worldwide.

The launch marks the first UK foray of Mr Schneider, whose company is listed in New York and capitalised at nearly \$500m.

Mr Schneider, the 69-year-old "entrepreneur's entrepreneur", designed and built the first US

cable system in Wyoming in 1953, and spent the next 30 years developing what would become a 1.1 million-subscriber network in 17 states. He sold our TCI's John Malone, one of America's media barons, in 1989, for \$2bn, and kept \$100m worth of TCI stock for himself. Since then, he has built an international network of cable and satellite investments that now spans 23 countries, including Israel, Australia and countries in Latin America.

Mr Schneider and Mr Malone, who are both based in Denver, Colorado, have done several deals together, including one infamous exchange that saw Mr Schneider buy international cable assets from Mr Malone for \$85m, only to sell back a fraction of the holdings at a considerable premium, using the rest of the assets as a platform for to expand his operations overseas.

Mr Schneider is famously press-shy, particularly since a heart attack in 1992. Known as a trail-blazer, he has been eclipsed in the popularity stakes by entrepreneurs who followed him – men such as John Malone and Wayne Huizenga, the founder of Blockbuster, the video hire giant now owned by Viacom.

Mr Schneider also hobnobs with some of America's best-known media moguls, including Ted Turner, the founder of CNN and a neighbour of Mr Schneider's.

Mr Schneider is famously press-shy, particularly since a

heart attack in 1992. Known as a trail-blazer, he has been eclipsed in the popularity stakes by entrepreneurs who followed him – men such as John Malone and Wayne Huizenga, the founder of Blockbuster, the video hire giant now owned by Viacom.

The key problem for SIB is drawing up a watertight definition of what makes a firm qualify for stamp duty relief that applies to any exchange.

It is considering alternatives to the registered trader proposal for maintaining liquidity at difficult times.

Swissair pressed to table bid for Allders

Pressure mounted yesterday on Swissair to table its proposed £145m offer for Allders International or withdraw from the increasingly acrimonious battle for control of the duty free shop operator, writes Tom Stevenson. Shareholders are due to vote on 10 June on BAAs recommended £130m bid, currently the only firm offer.

It emerged yesterday that early approaches from BAAs put a value of only £100m on the tax-free retailing chain, while approaches from Swissair had swung from an initial price tag of £200m to a tentative offer of £120m before the airline proposed an offer of £145m.

Confusion about the value of the business, which lost £1m in the six months to March, has focused attention on the fiduciary duty of Allders' management to accept the best offer for its shareholders. Allders claims it has done its duty by securing £130m for a business which has an uncertain future after the abolition of duty free within Europe after 1999. Swissair says it has been locked out, despite being prepared to offer £15m more than BAAs bid.

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STOCK MARKETS									
FTSE 100*		Dow Jones*		Nikkei					
3745.70	-29.00	-0.8	3857.10	3039.50	4.03				
4560.00	-49.00	-0.3	4568.60	4015.30	3.35				
1899.90	-12.90	-0.7	1945.40	1816.60	8.88				
2228.28	-2.54	-0.1	2241.97	1854.06	2.92				
1884.12	-11.87	-0.6	1924.17	1791.95	3.80				
5971.98	-1.84	-0.0	5778.00	5032.84	2.15				
2188.35	-13.15	-0.6	2228.05	1974.70	0.72†				
1157.07	-43.49	-0.4	11694.95	10204.87	3.27†				
2527.31	-24.14	-0.9	2570.78	2253.56	1.86†				
Source: FT Information									

INTEREST RATES



Allders plays a good hand over the duty-free

The proposed sale by Allders of its duty-free business is a small enough deal – not at all the usual stuff of controversy. Swissair is making it so, however. Its demand that its £145m offer for Allders' duty-free business be put to shareholders is causing quite a stir. The department store group's management has a fiduciary duty to its owners to secure the best offer for the retail chain. And Swiss Air is promising £15m more for the business than the price already agreed with BAA.

Allders was bulldozed into recommending the BAA offer, the argument goes, because the airport owner, by petulantly announcing its intention to end the Allders management contract at nine months' notice, threatened to make the operation even less viable than it is already.

But while it is always nice to find a reason to have a go at a wicked monopolist like BAA, in this case the argument doesn't bear much scrutiny. First, Allders had a fairly stark choice on Friday 17 May, when its deadline for bids expired, between a real offer of £130m from BAA and a far from copper-bottomed promise of a bid from Swissair. Having suggested it might offer as much as £200m before scaling back its estimate to just £120m during the process, Swissair had hardly behaved in a way that would instil any confidence in its ability to come up with the goods.

Second, management (and shareholders) were rightly quite chuffed to have bid BAA up to £130m from early soundings of £100m. This is a company, after all, about to lose a significant chunk of its business in 1999 when the European Union is abolished. In those circumstances, £130m in the bag was a pretty satisfactory prospect.

Far from painting themselves into an embarrassing corner, Allders' management appears to have played a reasonably good game of poker, using the spectre of Swissair to weaken BAA's otherwise strong hand and extract a sensible price for a business it quite clearly want shot of.

Allders will have to go through the motions of backing BAA, because the contract it has signed says it has to. But in truth it will be as happy as anyone to accept the higher offer. If, as seems likely, this is nothing but Swiss bluster, investors can relax, knowing that the risk of BAA walking away has been eliminated.

Downside in a glowing report

The Government is rather pleased with the economists at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Although its growth forecast was unsatisfactory

from the Chancellor's point of view, Mr Clarke himself could scarcely have written a more glowing end-of-term report on his own management of the economy.

Indeed, some of the choicer phrases in yesterday's annual report on the UK economy have a whiff of Whitehall about them. Accolades like "sound foundation for sustained economic recovery", "more flexible and less inflation-prone economy", and "a better jobs and inflation record" could have been lifted from any of the Chancellor's recent speeches. Only a cynic would suggest that Britain's £10m annual contribution to the OECD budget influences the organisation's assessment.

However, the report is not without its criticisms of macro-economic policy. One observation is that the premium investors demand for holding long-term gilts rather than bonds issued by the US and German governments has increased since late 1994. "One interpretation of these indicators is that there has been scant progress in building long-run UK monetary policy credibility through 1995," the survey concludes. Clearly the markets think prospects for continued growth and low inflation are not as good as the OECD makes out.

Now why is that? The answer lies with what you think Mr Clarke will do with interest rates and the public finances. Will he raise

interest rates later this year if the balance of evidence from the economic statistics tilts towards higher inflation? Will he stick to published spending plans and match tax cuts with further spending cuts in his pre-election Budget? Or will he cut interest rates willy-nilly and repeat last year's trick of putting the improvement in the public finances off for another year? The markets think the latter. And you know what? They are probably right.

Texas twist to Hinchliffe saga

For a businessman whose company, Facia, is privately owned, Stephen Hinchliffe generates an awful lot of column inches. Serious business people must be finding it all a bit galling, for there are presumably plenty of more important, interesting and successful entrepreneurs that could be written about. But no, for the moment Mr Hinchliffe wins hands down in the publicity stakes. In part this is explained by the expectation that this curious rag-bag collection of other people's left-overs will one day attempt to go public. A chequered business history, the fact that he and his finance director face proceedings by the DTI for disqualification as directors, and the odd rumble from credit-

ors, adds spice to the brew. Now there's a new twist. A company called Texas American Group, an outfit even more incredible than Facia itself, is planning a bid. At least, Facia has the merit of being a quite substantial retailing empire, even if it is made up of trading names that nobody else wants. Texas is not even that. There's the obligatory golf course (a must for any aspiring leisure empire), some time-share properties in the Canary Islands, and a few hotels. Then there's William Grosvenor, who most people know as a PR man. He's chief executive.

The company's most valuable asset, it seems, is a Nasdaq share quote in the United States. This it plans to use liberally in the acquisition of Facia, both as a method of buying the company from Mr Hinchliffe and other shareholders, and as a way of refinancing the business. All this is dependent on a satisfactory two-way audit. Mr Hinchliffe wants to satisfy himself that Texas is for real and Texas wants to satisfy itself that Facia is for real. So there you are. If it works, the seemingly unthinkable – Facia going public – gets to happen after all, albeit in the United States. As for what happens to Mr Hinchliffe, who knows? Does he get to stay or will he be off to pastures new? All will no doubt be revealed in the next exciting instalment of "Hinchliffe: Britain's most written-about businessman".

Woolwich close to pension deal with ex-chief Robinson

NIC CICUTTI

Peter Robinson, the former Woolwich chief executive dramatically ousted from his post two months ago, is on the verge of clinching a compensation package with the building society that could allow him to immediately draw an annual pension of £165,000.

Alternatively, under current tax laws Mr Robinson could opt to receive a tax-free lump sum of up to £370,000, plus a reduced annual pension of £135,000 a year.

In return, he will abandon a compensation claim based on the two-year notice period to which he would have been entitled to as part of his contract of service.

Laidlers and Paines, solicitors acting for Woolwich, are believed to be on the verge of agreeing that Mr Robinson, aged 54, be allowed his pension without any penalties for early retirement. His normal retirement age would be 62. If a penalty were to apply, his payout could be cut by up to one-third.

The Woolwich pension scheme is based on one sixtieth of salary for every year of service. Mr Robinson, who served almost 33 years with the society, would be entitled to more than half the £300,000 he earned before his sudden departure in the wake of allegations of financial irregularities. The deal, agreed in nut-

line with Mr Robinson's solicitors D J Freeman, must be accepted by the Woolwich board, which is yet to meet to consider the proposals.

It is believed, however, that some last-minute technicalities are unresolved. Once they are, both he and the building society are expected to announce next month they have reached an agreement.

Woolwich is currently under intense takeover speculation ahead of its £3bn flotation, planned for mid-1997. Among those tipped as potential predators are Prudential, the UK's largest insurer, and BAE, the tobacco giant which also owns Allied Dunbar and Eagle Star.

The society has still to appoint



Robinson: Announcement is expected next month

a permanent chief executive to replace Mr Robinson. The post is currently being filled by his predecessor Donald Kirkham, who stepped in at the society's request in early April.

The most recent suggested replacement is Andrew Longhurst, chief executive at Cheltenham & Gloucester, the former building society now owned by Lloyds Bank. Mr Longhurst is said to be unhappy at not being offered a seat on the Lloyds board.

A Woolwich spokesman said: "We have always said that any appointment was weeks rather than months away. We are talking to a number of people."

Mr Robinson's departure followed allegations of improper use of company resources. It was alleged that he had used society gardeners to carry out work on the grounds of his £450,000 home in Kent.

Sources at the Woolwich also claimed that Mr Robinson had wrongly authorised the use of a Range Rover for a member of his family and that unpaid decorating work had been carried out inside his house.

However, Mr Robinson strongly denied all the accusations, claiming that he was the victim of a smear campaign against him by disgruntled Woolwich employees who did not like his management style.

IN BRIEF

• Air France is in talks with at least four major U.S. airlines about a possible transatlantic alliance and hopes to have an agreement signed by the end of the year, the French state-owned airline confirmed yesterday. Talks are most advanced with American Airlines, United Airlines, Delta and Continental, a spokeswoman said. Exploratory talks have been underway for some time, she added, but it was too early to speculate about what form the alliance might take. Air France, which hopes to be privatised in late 1997 or early 1998, is also exploring areas of co-operation with Asian carriers. But the loss-making carrier, which has been fighting its way back to financial health through big cost cuts and productivity measures, said in April that any alliance would probably be a commercial one such as a code-sharing agreement, rather than an equity investment.

• Foreign & Colonial, the investment group, said yesterday that it is in talks to sell part or all of the 50 per cent stake in the fund management subsidiary it owns to Bayernische Hypo Bank, one of Germany's largest banks, which already owns the other half. The deal, which F&C stressed was still in its initial stages, could be worth up to £125m to the five F&C trusts that collectively hold half of Hypo Foreign & Colonial Management through a wholly owned company, Pountney Hill Holdings. The trusts have appointed Lazar Brothers to advise on the sale. HFCM is one of the fastest-growing fund management companies and recently completed the purchase of ESN, the electricity industry's £14.4bn pension fund. However, F&C admits that, unlike its German partner, it has tended to view HFCM more as a passive investment.

• South Korea's Samsung is cutting semiconductor production by 15 per cent in what is being seen as an attempt to slow the decline in world chip prices. The company said its decision to cut the monthly output of its 6 megabit DRAM to 12m units from 14m reflects the sharp downturn in international chip prices. An electronics analyst said: "Samsung's plan just reflects how desperate the chip makers are." Samsung is the world's largest producer of memory chips, which are widely used in personal computers.

• General Motors plans to invest \$750m in a vehicle plant in Thailand. Donald Sullivan, president of GM's Asian and Pacific Operations, said that both Thailand and the Philippines were excellent locations. "However, in the final analysis, Thailand was our preferred location because of the strength of the domestic vehicle market, proven infrastructure and well-established supplier base," he said.

• Shares in International Service System, the Danish cleaning group, plunged on news of a big increase in provisions at its troubled US unit. ISS said it may have to make provisions and charges totalling \$100m to cover insurance liabilities and overstated earnings at the US subsidiary, whose chief financial officer has already left the company. ISS added it was unable to forecast full year profits due to the current uncertain outlook.

• The US economy grew at a slower pace than the government previously estimated in the first quarter as businesses shrank their stockpiles of unsold good for the first time on four years. Gross domestic product, the total amount of goods and services, rose at an annual rate of 2.3 per cent, the Commerce department said.

Facia in balance as talks continue

NIGEL COPE

The future ownership of Facia, the retail empire controlled by Stephen Hinchliffe, remained uncertain last night after the company claimed it was talks with several parties regarding possible deals.

The statement appears to contradict claims made by Texas American Group, a quoted US shell company, which says it has reached an agreement to acquire the assets and liabilities of Facia, which owns high street names including Sock Shop, Salisbury's, Saxons and Free-man Hardy Wills.

Though Facia confirmed talks have taken place with Texas American, it said the agreement "was not a done deal".

Facia stressed that it is also doing due diligence on Texas as well as vice versa. This appeared to leave the door open on a reverse takeover which would see Facia take control of Texas, enabling Mr Hinchliffe's group to gain a stock market listing in the US as well as access to much-needed funds.

Facia is a shell company which has recorded no sales or profits for the past three years. Its chief executive is William Grosvenor, a London public relations consultant. "We have an agreed deal with Facia pending a valuation."

He added that if the deal goes through the company would seek to raise funds on the US stock market to invest in Facia. The plan is for Mr Hinchliffe to remain a shareholder and play a role in running the business.

Comment, page 21

Tomkins acts to halt slide in share price

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Tomkins has moved to scotch rumours that it planned \$1.6bn acquisition of US automotive products business Gates Rubber is on the rocks.

Yesterday it also promised shareholders a 15 per cent dividend hike for the year to April in an unusual attempt to halt the recent slide in its share price.

Worried by the company's apparent failure to complete the Gates acquisition, announced six months ago, the market had pushed the shares from a high of 234p in January to 247p this week.

Greg Hutchings, chairman, said the acquisition of Gates, a privately owned automotive products maker, had proved more complicated than anticipated. He thought it was in

first time a public company from the UK had attempted to buy a private US company with preference shares. The lack of a precedent had caused a mountain of regulatory work.

No promises were made about when the deal would be sewn up, but Mr Hutchings hoped to be able to announce completion within a few weeks. The delay meant that Tomkins was unable to give its

usual briefing to analysts before its close season and the lack of information had led to the shares' recent weakness.

As well as promising the higher dividend, the 13th consecutive rise of at least 15 per cent, Tomkins said it would report profits of at least £320m in July. That was in line with market expectations and the shares bounded 8p to close at 255p yesterday.

Tomkins has been one of the FTSE 100's steadiest performers in recent years but has fought a constant battle to overcome adverse City sentiment.

panned news of the proposed dividend rise with a warning that bad weather had hit some of its markets, especially holding back US lawnmower sales in the important March and April buying months.

Tomkins has been one of the FTSE 100's steadiest performers in recent years but has fought a constant battle to overcome adverse City sentiment.

Investment Column, page 23

1 OLIVER—THIS STUFF HAS TO GO TO RILEY'S IMMEDIATELY.

2 LATER...

3 I DON'T KNOW — IT SHOULD BE THERE. I PUT IT ON A BIKE THREE HOURS AGO.

4 BORN TO BE WI-LI-LI-LD!

5 MR RILEY ? I CAN'T APOLOGISE ENOUGH ABOUT THIS UNFORTUNATE DELAY.

6 TRY... HAVE A DAMN GOOD TRY.

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Profits bounce back at LIG

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

The recent history of London International will give encouragement to those who still preach the virtues of business focus. LIG's massive losses in 1993/94 were due to the sale of an ill-starred diversification into photographic processing and hefty provisions to enable the group to rebuild on the foundations of its original Durex condoms to rubber gloves business. Even after a £1.15m rights issue at 70p, there were sceptics aplenty two years ago who said that new management led by chief executive Nick Hodges still faced an uphill task in setting the group to rights. But their doubts are rapidly being proved misplaced.

Yesterday, LIG reported pre-tax profits lifted 72 per cent to £26.2m for the year to March, the second of the new management's promised three year recovery programme. The group looks on target to meet its aims of a 15 per cent operating return by next July. Last year's 10.1 per cent margin (see table) would have been 11 per cent but for continuing problems in making the new Avanti polyurethane condom, which accounted for an additional £3.1m of costs.

The cost savings promised in 1994 are also coming through, albeit slowly. Around half of last year's £4.6m savings are said to have come through from the £45m plant rationalisation programme, with possibly up to £3m more to come. There should be further benefits from the £8m shake-up at Aladian, the US consumer and surgical gloves group acquired for £46m in April into which the existing US operations are now being poured.

But with most of the unwanted brands like Wrights Coal Tar Soap and Woodward's grape water gone, the main part of the restructuring is now over and the market is increasingly looking to where LIG goes from here.

The marketing budget, starved under the old regime, is rapidly being restored, climbing 37 per cent to £3.4m last year. As a result, volumes contributed around a third of last year's 15 per cent underlying rise in condom sales to £17m. That is around 1 percentage point ahead of the growth in the market, which is an impressive performance for the world leader. At around 22 per cent, LIG already has close to double the share of its nearest rival so against the background of slow growth in the overall market, LIG needs to show that it can continue to both push through price increases and maintain its thrust into new markets like the Far East, Latin America and eastern Europe.

New products like Avanti - stronger and less smelly than latex condoms - and the Biogel Neotech non-latex,

powder-free medical glove should also help margins if not sales. But assuming profits hit £38.5m this year, the shares, 5p higher at 135p, are well up with events on a forward p/e of 20.

Tomkins offers reassurance

Tomkins has had an extremely trying first half to 1996. Having seemingly won the long uphill struggle to convince the market of the merits of its purchase of RHM, its failure to do the £1m plus the t's of its latest big deal, the £200m acquisition of automotive products group Gates, and the market's mistrust of conglomerates in the wake of a profit warning from BTR, have conspired to clobber the shares.

Having started the year not far short of 300p, they had fallen as low as 247p by the middle of the week, when the decision was taken to try to stem the slide with a reassuring trading and dividend statement.

It appears to have done the trick -

the shares bounced 8p to 255p yesterday as investors were reminded that a better-than-expected dividend rise of 15 per cent to 9.95p would represent the 13th consecutive rise in the payout at least 15 per cent.

As far as trading is concerned there were no real surprises. Bad weather hit the important March/April lawnmower buying season in the US, but that had been expected.

Forecast profits of £320m were bang in line with market expectations and confirmed that Tomkins is a long way from being one of the lumbering dinosaurs that Hanson and BTR have evolved into.

It may do itself no favours in the City by refusing to bow to the altar of focus, as Williams has done, but it can produce a fairly compelling statistical argument that its spread of activities works.

Reassured that the Gates deal is back on track, if a bit delayed, investors can re-focus on Tomkins' plentiful attractions. Unlike BTR, for example, it is still small enough to grow meaningfully, it has little exposure to the difficult markets of Europe and Australia, and a

strong balance sheet. It would be wrong to forget also that the company is one of only five on the London market to have increased its dividend by more than 15 per cent for the past 10 years. On the basis of forecast profits of £442m to next April, the shares at 255p stand on a prospective price/earnings ratio of only 12, backed up by a forward yield of 5.5 per cent. Very good value.

M&G's crown slips askew

M&G once had a claim to be described as the Marks & Spencer of the retail saving industry. But unlike the retailer, M&G's crown has been slipping a little of late. On the face of it, yesterday's 18 per cent rise in interim profits to £31.2m for the six months to March was respectable enough and M&G's shares dipped just 8p to £1.96. Gross sales of unit and investment trusts soared by £161m, or 41 per cent, to £58m in the period, helping M&G retain its position as market leader in the sector. But maintaining this leading role has been achieved at some cost. In January 1994, the group dropped the traditional "front-end" charge on its key PEP products to revive flagging sales.

That has clearly had the desired effect, although M&G had a following wind from a booming stock market and a buoyant unit and investment trust market. It also had the benefit in the latest six months of the launch of the M&G Equity Investment Trust, which pulled in £156m of new funds, including £131m in Peps. In all, funds under management were 25 per cent higher at £15.3bn over the past year, which looks impressive until you compare it against rivals. Permanent has seen funds grow by a massive 60 per cent a year over the past five, admittedly from a low base.

M&G has done well with its unsung institutional fund management side, which added £355m of new money in the six months and now represents well over a third of the total. Early signs of the long-awaited recovery in life and pensions is also good news.

But M&G faces a number of problems. Margins are clearly increasing under pressure, the performance of its funds has been less than sparkling and, perhaps most seriously, a flood of retail money into unit trusts is usually a sure sign of the end of a bull market. Pre-exceptional profits of £73m this year would put the shares on a forward rating of 18. High enough.

Warburg kicks the ball around with bets on euro

CITY DIARY

NIGEL COPE



Doing a Gazz: Warburg ousts England in the quarter-final

Economists at SBC Warburg have clearly had a bit of time on their hands recently. They have turned their thoughts to the impending European football championships, weaving in a dash of political and economic comment on all the participating nations. It is all neatly packaged in the bank's newly published *Euro '96 Special*.

But using a duff piece of footwork even Gazzetta would be proud of, it has used the football tournament as a metaphor for monetary union, pondering the chances of the various countries achieving the criteria for monetary union by 1999. England comes bottom with a 10 per cent chance (jointly with Greece) while Germany is seen as the most likely with a 90 per cent probability.

As for the footie, the economists are tipping Spain to

beat the Netherlands in the final with England reaching the quarter-final stages.

Rather disloyally they reckon Switzerland won't make it past the preliminary stages.

Tony Knox, the chairman of City PR firm Financial Dynamics, is recovering at home after a triple bypass heart operation. Mr Knox, 50, went into hospital last Wednesday and is expected to be away from City spin-doctoring for three to four weeks. The operation comes

as a surprise to many who know Tony as a fit fellow who regularly works out and wields a mean racket on the tennis court. FD says "he's fine and making a good recovery."

Meanwhile, the company is on the verge of signing a deal with its French majority shareholder which will see the French company buy out the directors who own 35 per cent of the company. It will then introduce a scheme that will distribute the company's shares more widely among the staff. In other words, wonga all round.

Yorkshire Water: the company that would struggle to run a bath even if it had any water, has a fresh

set of problems to contend with. It is being blamed for a decline in local tourism. The reason is that holidaymakers have been shying away from the region for fear that local hotels and guesthouses will be affected by water restrictions. "They don't want to find themselves bathing in a bucket," one local said.

Sir Desmond Pitcher of United Utilities: is well known for his confidence in his own abilities. He has now taken to making up new words. In the company's results presentation yesterday he referred to the country's "abnormal" weather conditions over the last year. Does he mean abnormal, or extraordinary? Or both?



Maria Reinhagen: (pictured right) was named as vice-chairman of Christie's Europe yesterday. The appointment makes her the most senior woman in the auction house's European operations. The promotion is the Swiss businesswoman's second barrier-breaking appointment. In 1994 she was the first woman to be appointed to the board of UBS.

Ms Reinhagen is described as "an effective business-getter" and has been running Christie's office in Zurich. In her 18 years with the company she has been involved in several record-breaking sales. In 1990, one of her clients narrowly missed out in the bidding for the Van Gogh portrait of his physician, Dr Gachet. At \$82m it remains the most expensive work of art ever sold at auction.

Ms Reinhagen was one of three vice-chairmen announced by Christie's yesterday. The others are Francois Curiel and John Lumley.

IN BRIEF

Alpha Airports: has warned of a decline in first-half profits as a result of losses in its US kitchens and a lower spend per passenger on light catering. The flight services and retail group told its annual meeting, however, that it had seen an 8 per cent increase in the number of passengers passing through airports in which it operates. Alpha also said the airport operator BAA had pledged not to discontinue its management contracts to run dry-free operations for retailer Alders at London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports if BAA buys the Alders business.

Whitecross: the first quoted dentist, made a reasonable start to trading on AIM yesterday. Although the shares failed to live up to recent break-neck market debuts, they moved up to an 11p premium, finding a level of 95p in thin trade. The company raised just £825,000 with the issue of 982,143 shares at 84p. The cash will be used to fund the group's expansion. It plans to open nine new London surgeries.

Ransomes: the Ipswich-based lawnmower manufacturer, returned to the dividend list at the half-way stage. Interim results showed a 10 per cent rise in sales to £10.2m from which profits of £6.7m (£25m) were struck. After a rise in earnings per share from 1.9p to 3p, a 0.5p dividend is to be paid.

Jefferson Smurfit Group: said it expected the sharp fall in demand for most of its products to result in a difficult 1996. The weak economies of much of Europe in the first half of the year had also led to a fall-off in product prices, the paper group told its annual meeting. In the US, demand for the first quarter was poor, with most product prices showing sharp declines. Its Latin American companies also suffered from the effects of both low US demand and lower pricing. Profits, however, have held up well there, it said. Results have been mixed in the UK and Ireland, but the company can look forward to a more positive second half of the year, the company said.

PowerGen: has appointed Colin Short as deputy chairman with effect from the company's annual meeting on 15 July. Mr Short is chairman of United Biscuits.

House of Fraser: directors faced criticism for its poor profit performance and its marketing strategy from shareholders attending yesterday's annual general meeting. "House of Fraser stores are dull," said one shareholder, while another said they were visually unexciting and lacking in innovation when compared with competitors such as Marks & Spencer and Burton's Debenhams chain. The chairman, Brian McGowan, said the current financial year has started "encouragingly" with like-for-like sales for the first 17 weeks of the year up by 5.1 per cent. But he warned that problems with own bought ladieswear and plans to clear old-fashioned stocks meant gross margin improvements would not be evident until the second half.

Quicks Group: said profit for the first quarter of 1996 are in line with a very strong corresponding period last year and trading conditions are currently strong. The group told the annual meeting that it had seen an encouraging improvement in new car retail sales from April onwards, while used car sales have continued an upward trend which has been evident since the start of 1996. This was "welcome confirmation that the private buyer is now returning to the market", it added.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	PBT £	EPS	Dividend
AB Leisure (I)	42.8m (42.1m)	1.8m (1.8m)	3.6p (3.2p)	1.25p (1.25p)
Bett Brothers (I)	14.0m (15.2m)	1.7m (3.8m)	9.6p (13.4p)	1.75p (1.75p)
Dovey Glass Assocs (F)	1.23m (1.04m)	0.57m (0.12m)	7.37p (1.68p)	2p (1)
Lorrenth & Berchetti (P)	25.8m (23.8m)	-0.5m (-5.3m)	-2.3p (-24.7p)	n.d. (n.d.)
London Little Group (F)	310m (287m)	75.2m (53.2m)	5.76p (4.02p)	2p (1p)
Mid Kent Holdings (F)	41.4m (37.0m)	12.3m (8.3m)	58.7p (37.2p)	2.4p (2.6p)
M&G Group (I)	- (1.2m)	31.2m (25.5m)	28.6p (25.6p)	1.15p (1.14p)
Rugby Properties (F)	28.0m (19.8m)	2.4m (5.8m)	1.22p (3.33p)	1p (1p)
Russo (I)	103m (93.5m)	6.7m (5.0m)	63p (1.98p)	0.5p (n.d.)
South West Weather (F)	314m (266m)	102m (53.2m)	77.7p (43.7p)	3.5p (2.3p)
Todd Group (F)	11.7m (8.7m)	2.1m (1.8m)	5.66p (3.2p)	0.1p (0.1p)
United Utilities (F)	1.84bn (1.97bn)	273m (294m)	51.7p (48.9p)	22.65p (25.55p)
Warren Estate Holdings (D)	7.23m (6.3m)	4.46m (3.96m)	7.81p (5.88p)	4p (3.85p)
(F) - Final (I) - Interim				

Redland gives warning after harsh winter

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Rudolph Agnew celebrated his first annual meeting as chairman of building materials group Redland with a profits warning, confirming the difficult conditions affecting the construction industry in the UK and Europe.

This year the picture is further clouded by the appalling weather conditions during the winter throughout Europe which have depressed first-quarter results substantially, he told shareholders.

"These conditions lasted until the end of February in the UK and the end of March in continental Europe. Since then, volumes have returned to around expected levels although the underlying level is still slightly below last year in most European operating companies".

Redland's shares fell 8p to

close at 398p on the news as Mr Agnew added: "The poor start to the year is expected to lead to group profits in the first half being well down on 1995 levels." He thought the second half would be broadly in line with the same period last year.

Last year, first-half profits amounted to £165m; for the full year they were £237m.

Mr Agnew told shareholders that he expected a recovery in the UK housing market to lead to improved volumes in the second half. German housing permits had also stabilised after falling 25 per cent over the year.

Recent data suggested that Redland had come through a torrid start to the 1990s when it struggled with weak construction markets and high debts, partly incurred by overpaying for rival materials group Steetley. Shareholders ended up suffering a dividend cut in two stages, from 25p to 16.7p.

Analysts believe it is now in better shape, however, with £220m in cash from the Braas restructuring and gearing of only 24 per cent putting it in a better position to concentrate on its core businesses.



Rudolph Agnew: Warned that first-half profits would be down on the previous year

Boom in PEPs benefits M&G

NIC CIRCUIT

Strong global equity markets and booming sales of unit trusts and personal equity plans helped M&G one of the largest UK fund managers, to a post an 18 per cent rise in interim pre-tax profits to £34.4m.

The increase followed a 25 per cent rise to £15.3bn in the group's funds under management compared with the same period last year.

However, M&G's share of the unit trust market dipped from 10.9 to 10.2 per cent.

Sir David Money-Coutts, group chairman at M&G, said: "Over the six-month period, [our] revenue grew by 14 per cent to £70m, a record high for the Group. The increase was mainly in our annual fee revenue and was the result of the rise in the FTSE All Share Index over the period."

Sir David added: "We ... expect the balance of our revenues to shift in favour of annual fees away from initial charges."

In recent years, M&G has moved away from levying initial charges on its PEPs. If policy-holders dispose of their invest-

<p

A weakness at the heart of the German solution

It has been another bad week for Hilmar Kopper, the chairman of Deutsche Bank. Klöckner-Humboldt-Deutz, the engineering group in which Deutsche has a 48 per cent stake, has uncovered huge losses that threaten its very survival. Nobody seems to have been more surprised than Deutsche.

Once again, the relationship between German companies, their shareholders and their bankers is coming under intense scrutiny. The country where stakeholders really matter, where owners, managers, bankers and employees are all supposed to have a say in the running of their companies, is having a serious attack of self-doubt.

With 15 people, including Paul Hochscherf, KHD's deputy chairman, now under investigation for alleged fraud and embezzlement, a grisly tale appears to be unfolding at the heart of German industry.

The story is becoming an all-too-familiar one, in which only the name of the company in trouble seems to change. Deutsche Bank's image has been badly tarnished in recent years by a series of difficulties involving firms in which it was deeply involved as leader, shareholder or both.

Remember Metallgesellschaft, the engineering and metals group that suddenly discovered huge losses in commodities, and the Schneider property group, whose chairman fled the country when his financial difficulties were discovered? Jürgen Schneider is now in a Frankfurt jail awaiting trial.

Perhaps most serious of all the Deutsche imbroglios, although it was not remotely a criminal case, has been the mess made over the last few years by the management of Daimler-Benz, Germany's most important



INDUSTRY VIEW
PETER RODGERS

engineering and aerospace group. Last year it lost a whopping

£5.7bn at Daimler's annual meeting last week, Mr Kopper was sharply criticised by shareholders for his role in the fall from grace of a company in which Deutsche owns a dominant 24.4 per cent stake. Indeed, Mr Kopper is head of Daimler-Benz's supervisory board, and shareholders took the not unreasonable view that he ought to have known something about the problems earlier.

Deutsche has fallen down in its role as a large shareholder rather than as banker

It is not just Deutsche's reputation as one of the bluest of blue-chip banks that has been damaged. The series of corporate embarrassments involving the bank have also shown up the weaknesses of the once much-praised German system of corporate governance, and shaken the confidence of some of the enthusiasts for importing German practices.

The idealised and, until recently, influential view of the German system is that bankers ensure that managers in industry have the finance for long-term investment and are shielded from the short-term pressures that stock markets bring to bear on British and American companies.

They exercise their benevolent influence at two levels: by sitting on supervisory boards and by supplying

has been one of the sternest critics of the German system, and a debunker of what he sees as the myths that circulate abroad about the dominant role of the banks in German industry.

This may seem odd, given Deutsche's deep involvement with KHD, Metallgesellschaft, Schneider and Daimler, troubled companies where its bank does indeed have a powerful direct interest. But it is a fact that ownership and influence in German industry are much more

finance to the executive management.

Colin Mayer, an Oxford professor and one of the leading researchers in the area, pointed out in a paper last week for the left-of-centre Institute of Public Policy Research that major involvement of the banks in German companies in fact applied to only a small sector of German industry.

The reality is that there are high levels of concentration and control of German companies both by family shareholders and by other companies that own stakes rather than banks.

Indeed, it is beginning to look as if the question of bank involvement in German industry is something of a red herring. The significance of Deutsche Bank's problems is that it has fallen down in its role as a large shareholder rather than as banker to the companies in trouble.

The lessons have not been overlooked in Germany. Managers and shareholders are now looking abroad for new ideas to help them overcome the rigidities and inefficiencies of their own system.

At the heart of German corporate governance is the two-tier board. The top tier, or supervisory board, is drawn from a variety of interests, including bankers, shareholders and employees. Since the supervisory board knows the company better than outsiders, it should be in a better position than anyone else to monitor the performance of management.

The case for the German system is that it avoids what one enthusiast called "the expensive absurdity" of having to wait for a hostile takeover bid to get anything done about a management that has gone wrong.



In the critics' spotlight: Hilmar Kopper is facing difficult questions about supervision at Daimler

But after Daimler-Benz, it is hard to take this line of argument very seriously.

There was, of course, never any likelihood of the Conservative government importing two-tier boards to the UK, since opposition to the idea is firmly entrenched throughout British industry.

And despite the rhetoric from the Labour Party about a shareholder society, there seems little inclination to force-feed British industry on German methods, and the earlier en-

thusiasm among some of the party's policymakers has been discarded.

Alistair Darling, the City spokesman, made clear in a speech last week that Labour was now inclined to build on the British tradition and not try to import German patterns for running companies. In other words, Labour has backed away from radical legislation on corporate governance.

British companies may not be run any better than their counterparts in Germany, but cases such as KHD

make it hard to believe they are significantly worse. As Professor Mayer suggested, the stakeholder bandwagon may even be getting under way in the UK just at the wrong moment.

If anything the flexibility of the British system for running companies, with its single-tier boards, powerful executive managements and widely dispersed shareholdings, may have some special advantages of its own at a time of accelerating technical change and competition.

Foreign Exchange Rates

Sterling		Dollar	
Country	Sterling	Spot	3 months
US	1.5345	9.7	24.21
Canada	2.3022	11.3	50.37
Germany	2.2315	53.48	159.149
France	2.3819	52.13	145.005
Italy	2.2779	75.50	221.246
Japan	1.6512	75.25	207.23
ECU	1.2455	15.7	45.40
Belgium	4.3531	12.9	34.29
Netherlands	9.0253	17.03	52.98
Norway	0.57	8.5	17.5
New Zealand	1.0259	18.54	22.03
Spain	2.2819	26.38	72.89
Sweden	1.2307	9.15	23.34
Switzerland	1.9133	15.55	19.84
Australia	1.9222	20.31	67.45
Hong Kong	1.5783	10.61	22.47
Malaysia	1.8328	0.4	2.4995
New Zealand	2.2460	45.57	133.16
Saudi Arabia	5.7552	0.4	3.7504
Singapore	2.1643	0.4	3.0400

Forward rates quoted High to low are at a discount; subtract from spot rate add to spot rate

For latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033. Calls cost 3p per minute (cheapest rate) 40p other times.

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	0.9588	16.20	Nigeria	130.015	84.7000
Austria	0.5481	1.0720	Oman	0.5910	0.3650
Australia	1.5205	10.24	Pakistan	5.0470	0.3200
China	2.2708	8.2203	Philippines	40.477	2.4260
Egypt	5.2267	3.407	Portugal	46.7330	3.0200
Finland	2.7664	4.7338	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
Greece	2.4840	2.6200	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
India	5.3725	24.6500	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
Kuwait	0.4683	3.0300	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
Malta	0.4683	1.7075	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
New Zealand	1.5332	1.5200	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
Spain	1.2307	1.2100	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
Sweden	1.2307	1.2100	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
Switzerland	1.9133	15.55	Russia	5.8576	0.5200
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Interest Rates

UK	60%	Germany	2.50%	US	Prime	8.75%	Japan	Discount	0.50%
Banks	6.07%	Lombard	4.50%	US	5.00%	5.25%	Belgium	2.50%	0.50%
Investment	3.70%	Canada	5.00%	Fed Funds	5.25%	2.50%	Central	3.30%	
Italy	8.00%	Prime	7.00%	Spain	7.00%	7.50%	Switzerland	3.50%	
Discount	8.00%	Discount	5.00%	10-Day Repo	7.50%				
Netherlands	2.60%	Denmark	3.25%	Sweden	3.00%	1.50%			
Advances	2.60%		Repo (Ave)	6.70%	Lombard	4.25%			

Yield calculated on local basis

Source: H.M. Gilt Yield

Bank of England

Bank of America

Bank of New York

Bank of Tokyo

Bank of America

sport

Ridgeon dedicated to the sport he loves

Tomorrow will be the third anniversary of the end of Jon Ridgeon's career. He will mark it by running the 400 metres hurdles at the European Cup final in Madrid.

When Ridgeon snapped his Achilles tendon in Bratislava, Slovakia, three years ago while making a second comeback from injury, medics experts said he would never run again.

At 26, the athlete who had had it all going for him – blond good looks, Cambridge degree, world high-hurdles silver medal while still in his teens – had to endure it all going away from him.

Now, however, Ridgeon is about to win his first international vest since 1992 after completing comeback No 3 – and it was no coincidence that his choice of venue for a final preparation should have been last Wednesday's meeting in Bratislava.

"I had some absolutely horrendous memories of Bratislava," he said. "There were some ghosts to lay."

For Ridgeon, an intensely competitive high achiever, the frustration of the past few years has been immense. He channelled his energies into a media career which involved him interviewing athletes for satellite TV, but the sense of being cut off in his prime never left him.

It was only after another operation on his Achilles ten-

Mike Rowbottom talks to a British prospect for tomorrow's European Cup hurdles who, three years ago, was told by doctors he would never run again

don last year – his fourth in all on either foot – that he began to think the unthinkable once again. The surgery, which was simply intended to repair him sufficiently for recreational activities such as tennis, restored sufficient movement for him to contemplate hurdling again.

Six months ago he resigned from his media jobs and dedicated himself, heart and soul, to getting fit once more, training in America, South Africa and Australia.

At last Saturday's Welsh Games, Ridgeon marked his first race on British soil for four years with an exuberant victory in blustery conditions.

When he saw that he had broken 50 seconds – recording 49.87 – he grasped the air in front of him for joy. "I love athletics more than anything else," he said afterwards, and you could see the truth of it.

In the overall scheme of things, Ridgeon should have been equally delighted to have

come through Bratislava unscathed. But he was less than thrilled at having finished sixth in 50.12sec, albeit on a windy, rainy night.

That reaction, though, indicates the extent of his recovery. Ridgeon is no longer always looking at the overall schemes of things, or pinching himself to see if he really is on the track. He has crossed over into becoming a competitive athlete once again.

"Instead of being elated at having finished a grand prix meeting again, I was disappointed because I had wanted to run 49.5sec," he said. "Now I am looking for a fast time on Saturday to take me on to the Olympic trials. The focus quickly changes when you are back in athletics."

Not that Ridgeon has completely lost the sense of satisfaction or having re-entered the world from which he had been exiled.

"It did occur to me when I was putting on my tracksuit two

or three minutes after the race that this was a much better situation than it had been three years ago," he said.

"I have given up a lot to make this comeback. I have gone from quite a safe world to quite an uncertain one. But, when I was sitting on the plane today, I couldn't help thinking that all my old colleagues would probably be in office."

His savings have been almost exhausted by funding his foreign training in recent months, but Ridgeon is on the brink of earning money once again as a jobbing athlete.

In his training diary, Ridgeon

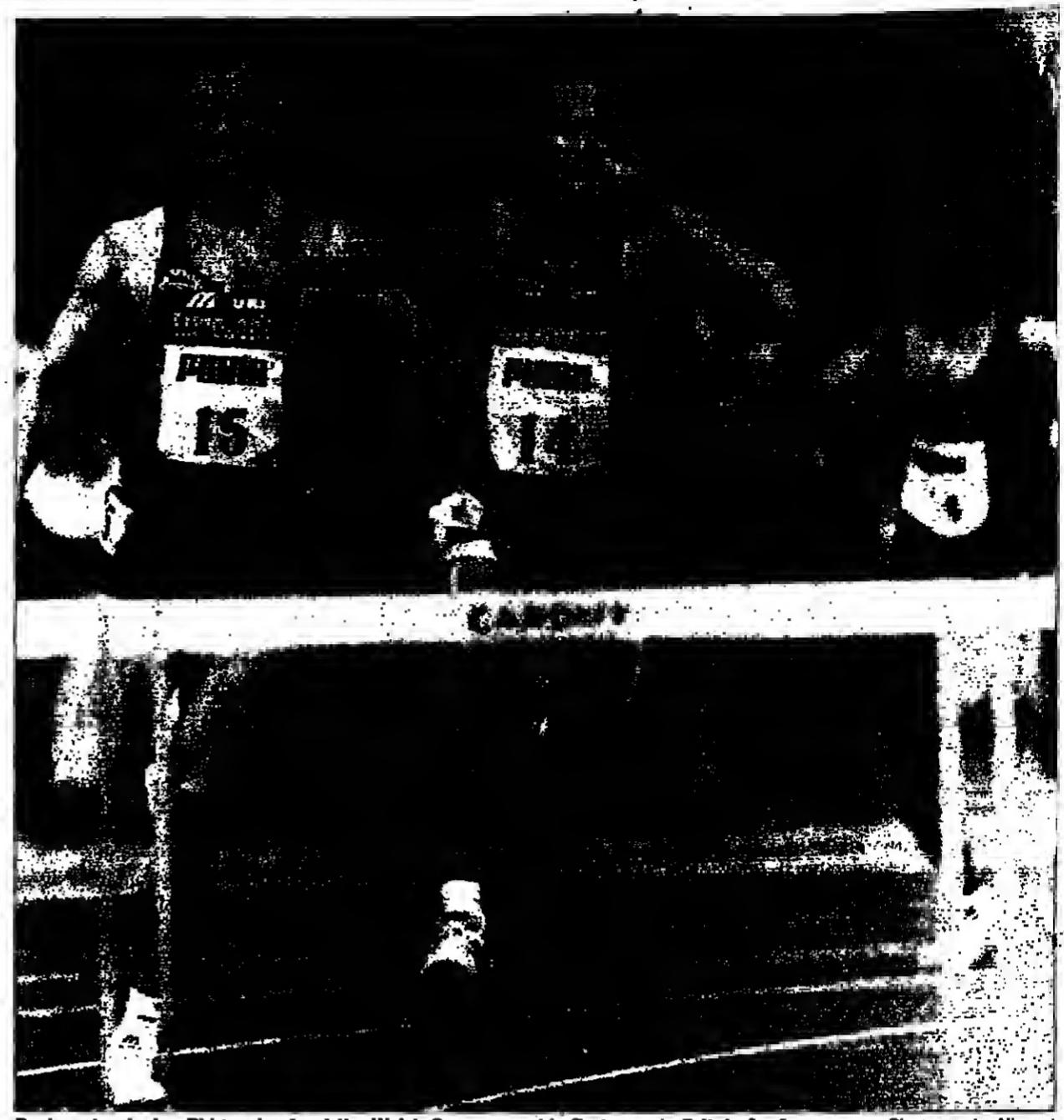
has inscribed a New Year's resolution that he will not get stressed about competing, but will simply enjoy it when it happens.

"I have trained for six months," he said. "I have done everything I can. If I do make the Olympic Games eight years on in a different event, it would be a dream come true. It would mean so much to me. But, let's not kid ourselves, I'm still not world class."

Tomorrow, however, in the first event of the weekend, he can take another big step towards that ambition.

"Everything is going perfectly," he said after his Welsh Games run – and resisted the impulse to touch wood. "There is no pressure on me," he added with a laugh. "I'm tired."

'I have given up a lot. I have gone from a safe world to an uncertain one.'



Back on track: Jon Ridgeon's win at the Welsh Games was his first race in Britain for four years. Photograph: Allsport

Déjà vu grips Gloucestershire

Cricket

MIKE CAREY
reports from Old Trafford
Gloucestershire 157-5 v Lancashire

A week can seem a long time in county cricket, especially when it is spent at the same venue. Thus Gloucestershire, embarking on the second phase of their seven-day stint here, probably had a dreadful feeling of déjà vu when their batting threatened to disintegrate again yesterday.

As Lady Bracknell might put it, this is one thing to throw wickets away in a limited-over contest; it is quite another to do so in the Championship, especially when winning the toss had given Gloucestershire valuable first use of the pitch recently used for the Texaco Trophy.

That meant it was already two

days old. It seemed to have two paces – slow and even slower – and, needing to occupy it for as long as possible, Gloucestershire could have done without the catalogue of errors that launched their innings after 37 overs had been lost to overnight rain.

On a more humid day than most this season, the pitch might also have greened up a shade under the covers, too. With the new ball in his hand and the breeze behind him, Glen Chapple bowled testingly well, even if his lbw decision against Tony Wright looked marginal to the distant eye.

Encouraged by that, he bowled Robert Critchley off an inside edge, helped by the batsman's minimal footwork. When Nick Traimor was caught behind trying not to play and Tim Hancock mistimed the speculative first ball of Peter Martin's

second spell to cover, Gloucestershire found themselves at 35 for 4.

It could have been worse. Martin, conceding just nine runs from 10 overs, howled around off-stump and beyond, thought he had Andrew Symonds caught behind from a rampart-side delivery.

Then, before he had reached 30, Mark Alleyne was almost spectacularly caught off the meat of the bat at short leg by John Crawley, then missed in the slips. By then, half-volleys had started to materialise and both batsmen dealt severely with them.

All was comparatively well until Symonds chased a short, wide ball from Chapple and was athletically caught, one-handed, by Warren Hegg. Symonds is still searching for his first Championship half-century of the season.

Gloucestershire's first break came when A J Motte not out but

Wright kipped him to Andrew Symonds at deep mid-on.

He bowled C J Morris, then

John Cowdrey, then Motte.

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Asprilla spoils day for Scots

Football

PHIL SHAW
reports from Miami
Colombia
Scotland

In a cameo as brief as it was beautiful and cruel, depending on your allegiance, Scotland learned why Kevin Keegan covet Faustino Asprilla and had their run in the build-up to Euro 96 extended by one defeat in five friendlies.

With only eight minutes left, the tormented run still lashed the Orange Bowl as if it were a scene from *Key Largo*. Cut to Newcastle's controversial Colombian, swaying like a palm tree in a storm, just long enough to swerve past Andy Goram and settle the match as ruthlessly as Bogart settling a score.

Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, bailed Asprilla's goal as "a 7m finish", but was not merely putting a brave face on his disappointment when he said that his exercise had otherwise been a success. For this was the best Scottish performance since the draw in Russia 15 months ago, as fluid and controlled as Sunday's setback

against the United States had been disastrous.

The principal plus point was the form of Goram. If that gives the impression that Colombia might have won more convincingly, it is misleading. The Rangers goalkeeper, starting an international for the first time in 18 months, exuded authority and made a brilliant save early on to tip a ferocious drive by Adolfo Valencia on to the bar.

Tosh McKinlay, winning only his fourth cap, enhanced his claim to the left wing-back role with a succession of surging runs and crosses. The heart of the team, Gary McAllister and John Collins, also beat more purposefully than for some time, although the dearth of goals remains a worry.

Scotland actually created the better chances, the easiest falling to Ally McCoist midway through the first half. Stuart McCall's chipped pass was headed across goal by John Spencer. McCoist, six yards out with only Farid Mondragon to beat, volleyed against the keeper's chest as he dove more in hope than expectation.

Mondragon had earlier saved well from Spencer, while it

took a last-ditch intervention by Jorge Bermudez to prevent McCoist hitting him after Colin Hendry's surge out of defence had taken Colombia unawares. Such scares, allied to the desire to monitor the condition of his squad prior to Sunday's World Cup qualifier in Peru, prompted Hernan Dario Gomez to ring the changes at half-time.

Brown said yesterday: "Colombia in Miami is virtually an away fixture, yet we made more chances and reduced them to

twelve minutes after their only clear-cut opening of the second half, a free header directed wide by Colin Calderwood. Carlos Valderrama's cork screw thatch rose to send Asprilla racing clear. What followed should, if nothing else, stimulate Tyne-side's jaded palate.

Brown said yesterday: "Colombia in Miami is virtually an away fixture, yet we made more chances and reduced them to

long range in the first half. I watched their game at Wembley on video and we did better against them than England, but you have to put your chances away at this level."

The only time we were in difficulty was when they brought on the big names and the crowd got behind them. We could easily have had three victories going into Euro 96 if we'd picked teams like Hungary."

Photograph: Jeff Widener/Allsport

hair raising: Scotland's Stuart McCall and Colombia's Carlos Valderrama in action

Derby turn to Croatia for recruitment

CLIVE WHITE

Newly-promoted Derby County went back to Croatia yesterday in order strengthen their chances of Premiership survival next season when they signed the midfielder Aljosa Antonovic, the international teammate of the Rams' sweepster Stiman, for £950,000.

Lacking the kind of funds which were made available to Arthur Cox a few years back, Jim Smith, the manager, has had to show prudently and a player of Antonovic's stature comes

cheap at the price (just as Stiman did), even for a 30-year-old. Smith, who had to see off late interest from Verona, said: "Igor was instrumental in persuading him to join us. He has said for a long time that this was the guy we needed. He can play anywhere in midfield and he averages 10 goals a season."

Graham Kelly, the chief executive of the Football Association, refused to comment yesterday on a newspaper report that Paul Gascoigne would be made to pay £5,000 compensation from his own pocket for damage caused to the Cathay

Pacific plane which flew home the England party from Hong Kong earlier in the week.

Refusing to talk in detail about investigations into the incident, Kelly said that the report was not "100 per cent accurate". He did add, though, that there was "no reason to doubt their word" that happened where Paul Gascoigne was sitting. There is certainly no suggestion that any other player was involved.

It was not the FA's only headache yesterday. The National Sporting Club is threatening to sue them for

compensation over a Euro 96 ticket enquiry which led to a raid on the club's offices by the Metropolitan Police. Charges of selling 1,300 tickets illegally were later dropped.

Meanwhile, Roy Keane, the Manchester United midfielder, is keen to repair the rift between himself and Mick McCarthy, the Republic of Ireland manager, after he went on holiday when he was meant to report with the rest of the team in Dublin.

"There is no reason to doubt their word" that happened where Paul Gascoigne was sitting. There is certainly no suggestion that any other player was involved.

It was not the FA's only headache yesterday. The National Sporting Club is threatening to sue them for

Barry Fry, sacked as manager of Birmingham City, is poised to move into the boardroom at Peterborough United in place of Chris Turner, the chief executive and a close friend of Fry, who intends to stand down because of illness.

Nationwide Building Society has confirmed a record £5.25m three-season Football League sponsorship. The agreement almost doubles the £1m per-year backing from insurance company Endsleigh. Chelsea are expecting to bank £2.6m in season ticket sales following the signing of Gianluca Vialli.

Bertie Vogts, the Germany coach, has said his country's most-capped player, Lothar Matthäus, will never play for the national side again after another episode in the player's long-running feud with Jürgen Klinsmann.

After Matthäus, who ruled out of Euro 96, repeated his allegations that Klinsmann, his successor as captain, had blocked his return to the side last year after a long injury lay-off, Vogts said: "Working together with him is no longer possible. There will be no come-back after Euro 96."

Photograph: Jeff Widener/Allsport

Coaches back training

Rugby League

DAVE HADFIELD

The Leeds manager, Hugh McGahan, has ruled out any question of a playing comeback, even though he and the club's coach, Sean Bell, are back in training. McGahan, aged 34, last played in 1991, and said: "There is no way I will play again after a year and a half — although I have told the players that I probably couldn't do any worse."

The case of Bell, who played for Auckland Warriors less than a year ago, is subtly different. He doesn't want to play, but will be able to if necessary," McGahan said.

The New Zealand Test stand-in, Tony Kemp, was making his

return from a broken arm in the Alliance team last night. If he suffers no reaction, he is in line for a place on the bench tomorrow against Wigan, who will be without Va'aiga Tuigamala with a hamstring injury.

Leeds will be without two of their forwards, Adrian Morley, who was suspended for one match last night after being sent off for a swinging arm at Bradford last week, and Harvey Howard, banned for four games after being called to account on video evidence for a similar offence in the same match.

Evan Cochrane, the London Broccos centre, has been banned for three games for the punch that saw him sent off at Warrington. Cochrane has been fined £4,250 by his club.

Hill aims to enhance reputation

MOTOR RACING

DERICK ALLSOP
reports from Barcelona

From the ridiculous to the potentially sublime, Formula One, still slightly dumbstruck by the goings on at Monaco, has arrived here anticipating a regulation spectacle in Sunday's Spanish Grand Prix, a contest between the best being called to account on video evidence for a similar offence in the same match.

Evan Cochrane, the London Broccos centre, has been banned for three games for the punch that saw him sent off at Warrington. Cochrane has been fined £4,250 by his club.

David Hill approaches this race not only with his 21-point lead intact, but also with his reputation enhanced, at least in comparison with that of his nemesis, Michael Schumacher. Hill's dominance at Monaco until a rare engine failure put him out, and Schumacher's first

lap mistake have altered the balance of recognised power.

Of course, Schumacher is the best out there, and by some distance. He is not on course for a third consecutive title because the Ferrari, as he forecast, is not yet up to the task. It is essentially down to him that the car has been anywhere near the Williams, let alone on pole at the last two grands prix. However, Schumacher is not superhuman, his shunt at Portier the consequence of his pushing too hard on a slippery surface. It will have been on his mind ever since. And it will have been on Hill's mind ever since.

Schumacher will have to wait

perhaps another two races for the significant modifications which

should improve his car, but will be content enough if conditions are dry on Sunday. While the Ferrari proved even more of a handful on the wet streets of Monte Carlo, the Williams in Hill's hands eased away from the rest with calm assurance.

Whatever the weather, the setting and atmosphere will be far removed from the scenario of the last meeting as the Circuit de Catalunya has proved no more alluring for the locals than Jerez. But while Barcelona may lack spectators, it is acknowledged and respected as a genuine race-track, complete with a long straight to accommodate overtaking manoeuvres.

Hill and Schumacher have a

win apiece here and should be at the forefront again this weekend. Jacques Villeneuve, in the other Williams, will be anxious to make more of an impression after being seemingly overawed at Monaco, while Benetton could be back in contention after signs of progress and McLaren will seek another step forward in their revival campaign.

■ David Coulthard has ruled out a move to Jackie Stewart's new Formula One team. The McLaren driver was reported to be at the top of Stewart's shortlist for a place in the Formula One team he is launching in 1997. Coulthard's manager, Tim Goss, said: "I think it's a bit of a shock to him that he's not been offered a seat." Coulthard has been appointed as the Courage One Club's first chief executive.

PHILIPPE SELLAL (Spain) (Ferrari)

JACQUES VILLENEUVE (Canada) (Williams)

ANDREI CHIKHANIAN (Russia) (McLaren)

MARK BLANEY (UK) (Sauber)

CHRISTIAN FALKENBERG (Norway) (Jordan)

<p

SPORT

Muster wary of the fast set

Tennis

JOHN ROBERTS
reports from Paris

Having advanced to the third round of the French Open without a blip yesterday, beating the Frenchman Gerard Soler, 6-1, 6-3, 6-0, Thomas Muster generously offered encouragement to those of his challengers whose inclination is to attack rather than chisel points from the baseline.

The clay courts at Stade Roland Garros are fast enough not to disadvantage serve-volleyers, Muster argued, estimating the pace to be roughly the same as the rubberised concrete at the United States Open. "The difference is that here you have to slide and keep your balance."

In particular, Muster had Pete Sampras, Goran Ivanisevic, Richard Krajicek and Michael Stich in mind, but the unseeded Stefan Edberg underlined the point in spectacular style with a 6-2, 6-2, 6-1 win against Carlos Moyá. The 20-year-old from Barcelona is the only player to have beaten Muster on clay this year.

Edberg's win guaranteed the 30-year-old Swede a special trip down memory lane to mark this latest stop on his retirement tour. He now plays the fourth-seeded Michael Chang, who defeated him in the 1989 final. Edberg, who led Chang by a service break in the fifth set, has often rued the opportunity he missed to strike a telling blow for attacking play.

Yesterday, Chang, the game's great retriever, had to run long and hard to out-run Australia's Richard Fromberg, 6-4, 3-6, 7-6, 6-4.

Muster made one proviso in his prognosis: the courts will only remain equitable if the weather stays as warm and sunny as it has been for the past three days. A glance at the forecast suggests sluggish conditions ahead.

Not that much that happens here from now on will concern Greg Rusedski, whose thoughts have already switched from clay

to the slick grass of his adopted England and the groundwork necessary to tune his big-serving game for Wimbledon.

Rusedski was eliminated by Stich in the second round on the compact Court No 1 here yesterday, 6-3, 7-5, 6-3, and at the same time was given a lesson by the No 15 seed in how to adapt a style good enough to triumph at Wimbledon, as the German did in 1991.

Stich was only under threat from Rusedski during the second set, in which the Briton had two break points in the third game and a couple more in the ninth. In each case, Stich served his way out of trouble.

The German's sharpness was surprising considering he nearly did not enter the event in view of his lack of match practice since a foot operation in March.

Stich, whose 18 singles titles include clay-court victories in Hamburg and Stuttgart, sympathised with Rusedski. "Greg knows that his serve makes him a dangerous player on fast surfaces, but he's not sure how to play on clay," he said.

"That is very difficult for him," Stich added. "I know how it is, because a couple of years back I was relying on my service much more than I do right now. What Greg did today, staying back a lot, is just not going to help him on clay. On other surfaces, he just serves and volleys all the time. That's his game. That's good. I think he can improve, and there's still a lot of work to do. I think he can figure it out himself. I don't have to tell him what to do or what not to do."

Rusedski is receiving plenty of advice from his new coach, Brian Teacher, who will continue to work with him through Wimbledon.

"Brian has fixed up my backhand and he thinks that after two or three weeks of work everything is going to solidify. I'm going to jump on the grass courts at Queen's as fast as I can."

Steffi Graf continued her defence of the women's title with a 6-2, 6-2 win against Australia's Nicole Bratton. Graf has conceded only nine games in her two matches.

Results, *Sporting Digest*, page 27

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: Middlesex find form at last but Warwickshire made to work hard



Century-maker: Middlesex's Mark Ramprakash fends off a delivery from Craig White at Lord's. Photograph: Peter Jay

Umpire steps in to halt local difficulties

MICHAEL AUSTIN

reports from Northampton
Northamptonshire 314
Warwickshire 34-2

Like any self-respecting soap opera this could run and run, with an undercurrent of aggression bordering on animosity. By Tuesday week, when they meet in the Benson and Hedges Cup semi-final, these title-chasing counties will have spent another claustrophobic five days in each other's company.

Potentially irksome days, too,

on yesterday's evidence of

Shaun Pollock being warned for excessive short-pitched bowling to Mal Loye, and a heated exchange demanding the mandatory powers of the umpires.

Trevor Jesty, who stood at the football end, said: "There was a bit of hot air and a lot of chat between the Warwickshire captain [Dermot Reeve] and the batsman [David Capel]. The wicketkeeper [Keith Piper] kept trying to join in and we [myself and Tony Clarkson] told him to keep out of it."

Pollock, Warwickshire's new overseas player from South Africa, was also aggrieved because two appeals for catches close to the wicket against Loye and Kevin Curran were rejected.

All-Midlands matches, while

not so famous as Roses battles, still have the cutting edge of a

scimitar. Last summer Alan Lamb, the Northamptonshire captain, described the Warwickshire game - which his team won by seven runs - as being "a little like war", with the rider of that's the way Championship matches should be played".

Reeve, who also rated that

game as the best in which he had

achieved, his third five-wicket return for Warwickshire this time, for 37 runs, while Northamptonshire produced half-century makers in Russell Warren, Capel and Curran.

Warren made 76, with six

and 12 fours from 141 balls,

before his off-stump was torn out

by an express delivery from Pollock. It was a curiously comprehensive dismissal for

someone who had batted for almost three hours.

Between some now familiar Warwickshire histrionics, notably when Piper leapt into Reeve's arms after Tony Penberthy's dismissal, they fielded as champions should. Dominic Oster held a sizzling one-handed

catch to oust David Ripley

in the presence of Graham Gooch, the England selector.

Gooch was doubtless eager to hear first reports about Nick Knight, the Warwickshire opener and strong England candidate,

for the first test against the tourists at Edgbaston next Thursday. Knight has a cracked

left index finger but hopes to play in the Sunday match here.

Scoreboard, reports, page 26

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

Meaning what?

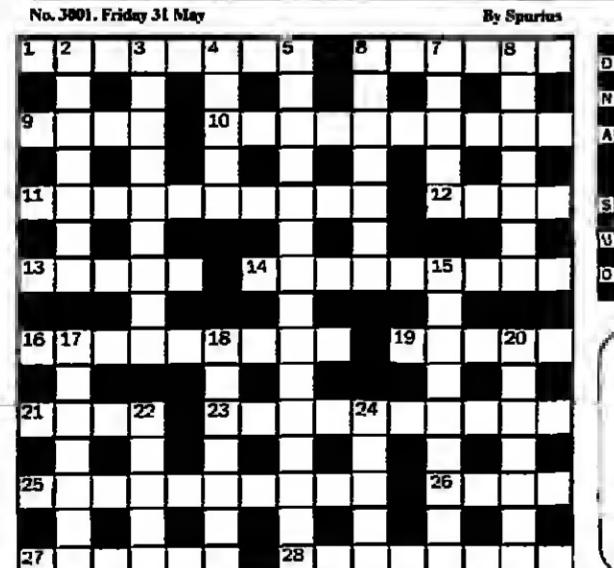
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No. 3801, Friday 31 May

By Sparus

Thursday's solution



ACROSS

- A house in Covent Garden? (9)
- Men-looking after setbacks, unwell, confined to home (16)
- Heavy oil to some extent undervalued (4)
- Tips on dealing with endless paperchase, up to a point (10)
- Construction worker, first-rate chap to have on course (10)
- Hard, consumed with malvolence (4)
- Type of store you'll get tea in? (5)
- Home occupied by poor soul, shame to have demolished? (9)
- Boredom evident retrospectively in what MP does to accommodate letter-writer? (9)
- Car Irishman originally drove in the centre (5)

DOWN

- Second of Republicans incarcerated by Democrat judge (4)
- Revival in religious education by reformed Cannes church (10)
- Lecturer's intelligence primarily used in media role? (10)
- Welshman's stand (4)
- Office is quick, after initial lapse, to enclose information (6)
- Submissive bearing (8)
- Discover evidence of a hummer's activity (7)
- Conservative features in place of knight in original satire (9)
- Letter left with space agency (5)
- Onset of long winter night? (5-7, 3)

Make the longest word you can from SARMETES. Yesterday's Scramble: CRABBE

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THE INDEPENDENT • FRIDAY 31 MAY 1996

In the *Independent's* guide to Euro 96 on Monday, Guy Hodgson substitutes a German ambassador

Jürgen Klinsmann, off the field, is the model of behaviour. He would want a professional footballer to behave modestly, educated and polite, he will probably be the most prominent continental star to play in England.

Ramprakash takes great leap forward

HENRY BLOFELD

reports from Lord's
Middlesex 322-5
v. Yorkshire

Weekes soon played forward to Peter Hartley with his bat away from his pad and was caught behind. Jason Harrison took his place and led a charmed life outside the off-stump, especially off the back foot. One lost count of the number of times he played and missed.

Jason Pooley played most of the early strokes before mysteriously leaving alone a ball from Darren Gough which hit the middle of his off-stump. One could sense the uncertainty within Ramprakash early on, almost as if he did not fully trust himself to go through with his strokes. Then, driving and cutting and timing the ball nicely off his legs, he began to find the boundary and each four did him a power of good.

Ramprakash is only 26 with any amount of cricket left in him, and all can be realistically now to put his head down, work hard at his game and fill his bag with as many hundreds as he can. This will rebuild his confidence and maybe help him to eradicate the faults which have made Test cricket such a problem for him.

His innings was the centrepiece of an entertaining day's play as Middlesex tried collectively to put their dismal early-season batting form behind them. They were helped by a pitch where the ball came on to the bat and there was also some bounce and an encouraging close boundary on the Grandstand side of the ground. It was one of the pitches relayed in the autumn of 1992.

Yorkshire bowled well before lunch: when there was still a touch of moisture on the surface, but without much luck. Paul

Warren made 76, with six

and 12 fours from 141 balls,

before his off-stump was torn out

by an express delivery from Pollock. It was a curiously comprehensive dismissal for

Maynard fined by Glamorgan for outburst

Mattew Maynard has been fined an undisclosed amount and issued with a severe reprimand by Glamorgan's cricket committee in the wake of his comments after the Benson and Hedges Cup quart-final defeat by Warwickshire on Tuesday.

The Glamorgan captain reported as saying that he was unhappy with the umpiring and claimed his side had been "robbed" of victory. Maynard was adjudged lbw near the end of the game and his displeasure at the decision was evident.

The county's prompt action may bring an end to the matter but the TCCB could still take its own disciplinary action.

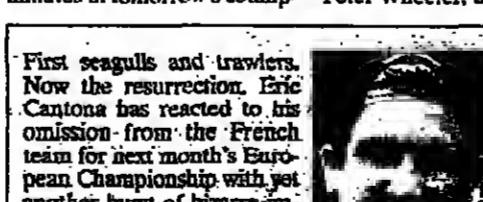


The Schizophrenia
Association of
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The Schizophrenia Association of Great Britain (SAGB) offers information and hope to those suffering from Schizophrenia and their relatives. Write for our free information pack which includes management suggestions, helpful advice for patients and their families and information on the relevance of good nutrition.

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The Schizophrenia Association of Great Britain acknowledges funding from the National Lottery Charities Board UK for a campaign for raising awareness about Schizophrenia



'Since I was not completely dead and since I even resurrected, they have done everything they could to make sure I die again in the end.'

We'll see who dies in the end.

Eric Cantona on his exclusion from Euro 96

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